NEWS / A3

Leviste charged with homicide; NBI probe sought

ACROSS /A14

RP's 1st biomass power plant to rise in Quezon

WORLD / A20

Saddam half-brother, aide hanged for crimes against humanity

ENTERTAINMENT / D1

Pinay stage actress recounts encounters with Dench, Slater

Lozano does it again, this time at Comelec

'NAYKUPO! SYA NA NAMAN?!?

By Jerome Aning

JUST WHEN YOU thought it was safe to come out, lawyer Oliver Lozano has filed papers again.

This time, they were not an impeachment

LOZANO/A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, January 16, 2007 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 39 P18 website: inquirer.net

Ombudsman ousts governor, 2 mayors

By Norman Bordadora and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.

ON THE EVE OF THE ELECTION PERIOD, THE Office of the Ombudsman appeared to have ended the political careers of a governor and two mayors after it found them guilty of grave misconduct.

The Ombudsman has barred the three elective

OMBUDSMAN/A13

East Asian leaders to promote biofuel

Urge Nokor to abandon nuclear test program

CEBU—ASIAN AND PACIFIC leaders, representing half of the world's population, yesterday signed an agreement to help reduce their dependence on conventional sources of energy and promote the use of biofuel.

They also urged North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

The Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security was signed by leaders from Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, India, Japan, China and South Korea after a three-hour summit here.

The agreement lists a set of goals for "reliable, adequate and affordable" energy supplies essential to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness.

Unlike the European Union, however, which last week unveiled ambitious energy proposals to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20 percent, the Asian leaders, who run some of the most polluted nations on earth, offered no concrete targets.

At the summit, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced a $2-billion aid package to help Asian nations develop energy-saving technology and ease the region's dependence on oil.

"For the purpose of eliminating poor access to energy in East Asia countries, we will offer $2 billion of aid," Abe told the closed-door meeting, according to a Japanese official.

Japan is a front-runner in energy-efficient technologies as the resource-poor nation, which relies mostly on oil imported from the Middle East, has been seeking to reduce its consumption since the

EAST/A6

12th ASEAN SUMMIT
One Caring and Sharing Community
CEBU INTERNATIONAL CONVENT

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo meets with journalists at the closing of the 12th Asean and East Asian summits. REM ZAMORA

PULIS
PULIS

MILITANTS clash with riot policemen during a rally near Malacañang sa Sugbu in Cebu City. The protesters claim Asean failed to address the people's demand for social justice, human rights and regional peace. REM ZAMORA

RP, China to sign 19 farm deals worth ₱240B

THE PHILIPPINES AND CHINA ARE SET to sign 19 farm agreements involving investments worth P240.1 billion ($4.9 billion) over the next five to seven years.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap yesterday said the deals, which were expected to be signed during the state visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Monday and Tuesday, included the development of 1.2 million hectares for rice, corn, sorghum and other crops in the Philippines.

In a press statement, Yap said the biggest deal would be a memorandum of agreement allowing Fuhua Group Ltd. to invest P187.67 billion ($3.83 billion) on one million hectares of land in the Philippines for higher-yielding corn, rice and sorghum.

Up for signing with the Beidahuang Group, the corporate state farm of Hei Long Jiang province, are two agreements involving a total P43.4 billion ($883 million) in investments.

One of the agreements with the Beidahuang Group will be for the development of 200,000 hectares for rice, corn and other crops in northern Luzon.

The other agreement calls for the setting up of a P5.88-billion ($120 million) agro-industrial project with all-weather greenhouses for the production and export of flowers and off-season vegetables and fruits to Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Yap said five ethanol projects will also be signed, three of them involving the Nanning Yongkai Industry Group.

One of the joint venture projects involving Nanning would produce 150,000 liters of ethanol per day. The production estimates of the two other

RP, CHINA/A6

Big business praises trade thrusts, but . . .

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CEBU—PHILIPPINE BIG BUSINESS IS elated by the prospects of Asean forming a trading bloc with other economic powerhouses in the region but is worried that high power costs would prevent the country from taking advantage of a broader consumer base.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, taipan John Gokongwei said the Philippines could still be a manufacturing hub in a borderless region if power rates were lowered to at least be at par with other Asean countries.

"If we keep our power rates low and everything else, I think we can compete in manufactured goods. Power rates are pretty high. It should at least be competitive with Thailand," said Gokongwei.

Gokongwei's business interests span air transportation, banking, food manufacturing, hotels, petrochemicals, power generation, publishing, real estate, telecommunications and textiles.

In a speech two years ago, Gokongwei noted that his factories in Thailand bought power at P3.5 per kilowatt-hour compared to P7/kWh in the Philippines. To beat the high power costs, he said he

BIG/A6

Spouses of leaders savor Cebu hospitality

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

CEBU CITY—THE SPOUSES OF EAST Asian leaders on Sunday savored Cebu's hospitality and its rich history as the sun shone for the first time after more than a week of heavy rains.

Sidewalk vendors on Colon Street wore Chinese costumes. Former street kids sang their hearts out in the Friendship Garden at the Family Park in Barangay Talamban. Hundreds of dancers performed from the Sinulog. Churchgoers spilled into the streets, waving at guests.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo was misty-eyed, touched by the warm reception, as well as the preparation of the city tour dubbed "Laag, Discovering Cebuano Heritage and its Influences."

Margot Osmeña, wife of Cebu Mayor Tomas Osmeña, also cried upon seeing 3,500 Sinulog dancers from 10 groups perform on Osmeña Boulevard to depict Cebu's Chinese era.

"I was so proud of the Cebuanos ... The financial resources were never enough but they did their best. Even the children were singing with joy," she told the INQUIRER.

Two spouses of the heads of state attended the two-hour tour—Gusharan Kaur of India and Khunying Chitravadee Chulanont of Thailand.

Other guests who attended were three spouses of foreign ministers, namely, Herawati Wirajuda of Indonesia, Lovely Romulo of the Philippines and Pacharin Pibulsonggram of Thailand; two spouses of economic ministers, namely, Kanjana Jirapaet of Thailand and Alice Favila of the Philippines, and Irene Ong, the wife

SPOUSES/A8

Bring Asean to grass roots, GMA urges summit delegates

By Volt Contreras

CEBU—BIDDING FAREWELL TO THE delegates to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and East Asia summits, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday urged her fellow leaders to usher in "payback time" for the ordinary people in the region.

Speaking at a news conference at the close of the meetings, Ms Arroyo said the participating leaders were able "to bring Asean to the grass roots" while taking the 10-nation bloc closer to political and economic integration with historic accords on migrant workers, trade and energy cooperation hammered out in the past week.

She stressed the "people-centered" nature of the accomplished agenda, but also cited two fronts in which Asean went hardline: The signing of a potent Convention on Counterterrorism and the "unanimous" call for North Korea to denuclearize.

Ms Arroyo said the summits "broke new dawn" for Asean which "through thick and thin (has) sailed toward unity as one formidable alliance to stamp out poverty and address inequality in its varied dimensions."

"For all of Asean's great efforts, it is payback time for a region whose legacy to its peoples is within reach," Ms Arroyo said in prepared remarks she read to the nationally televised news conference at the Cebu International Convention Center shortly after seeing off the *barong*-clad leaders of 15 other nations.

The host nation, she said, "thank(s) the leaders for the honor they have bestowed upon the Philippines and for working for one caring and sharing regional community."

"They have made the Filipino proud as we have emerged triumphant with all Asians from the agreements reached and signed. The peoples of Asia are the victors in these summits," she stressed.

Ms Arroyo also underscored the benefits awaiting Filipinos, particularly under the Cebu Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant

BRING ASEAN/A8

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Luzon and Eastern Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers while Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/01/15/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Palace warns Erap camp: Don't drag Gloria into fray, or else . . .

GONZALEZ: If the Estrada camp keeps on pushing the President, we will have to hit back.

INQUIRER PHOTO

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG HAS WARNED THE CAMP OF OUSTED PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada against dragging President Macapagal-Arroyo into the power plant payoff controversy involving former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, or it would "strike back" by bringing up the complicity of the deposed leader in multimillion-dollar kickback schemes. It did not elaborate.

The warning was aired yesterday by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who said that the man who blew the whistle on Perez—former Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez—could receive immunity under the law.

"If they keep on pushing the President, we will have to hit back. In the first place, Jimenez [had already said] that the First Couple had nothing to do with that. Secondly, there is proof that Erap [Estrada] went [to Argentina] and I think I saw in the papers a picture of him signing the Impsa [contract]," Gonzalez said.

Estrada claimed that he was offered a $14-million bribe to approve the Impsa (Industrias Metalurgicas Pescamora Sociedad Anonima) deal but that he declined because he could not consent to the sovereign guarantee being asked by the Argentinean power company that won the contract to rehabilitate and expand the $470-million Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan hydroelectric power plant.

Estrada was accused of taking a $14-million bribe to approve the deal, but he stressed that it was under President Arroyo's watch that the contract was approved—this a few days after Estrada was ousted by People Power II over corruption charges and Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over from him.

Estrada also claimed that the $2 million allegedly demanded by Perez to approve the deal was part of the $14-million bribe, which the former president said he refused.

Gonzalez, however, was unimpressed.

"You are now accusing the President. What about Erap who himself went to Argentina? Why are you not considering that? What was his motive in visiting the very owner of the project?" Gonzalez said.

As far as Malacañang was concerned, he said Jimenez's declaration that Ms Arroyo was not privy to the deal was enough to clear her.

"Jimenez is the dramatis personae, he is the one who knows," Gonzalez said, adding that this case could lead to other cases being filed against Estrada on top of the plunder case which verdict he is now awaiting in the Sandiganbayan.

"Notwithstanding Perez's motion for reconsideration, [his] case will go to the Sandiganbayan. He is on his own," Gonzalez said, when asked if the administration would extend any assistance to Perez because of his status as a former government official.

Gonzalez said the main concern of the Ombudsman now was to determine if the $2-million payoff was a case of bribery or extortion.

"It really depends on what really took place. For example, Mark Jimenez says it was extortion, which is robbery, because he was compelled, threatened, forced to give the money. The onus of proof is on the prosecution," Gonzalez said.

Jimenez, who brokered the Impsa deal, claimed that it was a case of extortion.

But whether it was bribery or extortion, Gonzalez said it would work against Perez.

"If you offer me money, you [are] either bribing me or corrupting me. There is a provision in the revised Penal Code about the corruption of a public official. There is a law that exempts the bribe-giver from criminal liability. Under Presidential Decree No. 749, the bribe-giver is given immunity. The purpose of that is to encourage people to come out [so that] we can cleanse the government of the corrupt official who received the bribe," Gonzalez said.

He admitted, however, that the Perez case had a larger implication on the government.

"With power in your hands you may think you are immune when you do something. I am not saying this would cast judgment on Nani Perez because the presumption of innocence is in his favor. But because he [has been] charged, there is that implication but that implication should not prevail at this time over his presumption of innocence.

"Otherwise, once you are accused, you are already guilty. That is bad. That is the tendency of our situation today. Give him a chance to explain the [money] paper trail," Gonzalez said.

Fire hits SC; damage minimal, says fire chief

By Armand N. Nocum and Margaux C. Ortiz

A FIRE BROKE OUT AT THE HISTORIC SESsion hall of the Supreme Court at the second floor of the tribunal's building in Manila yesterday, but fire officials managed to put it under control in less than an hour.

Fire fighters who rushed to the high court's compound along Padre Faura Street said the fire, which started at about 4 p.m., was caused by a short circuit.

Manila fire marshal Sr. Supt. Pablo Cordeta called damages due to the fire as minimal. He added that no records were torched during the fire that prompted second and third alarms before firemen put it out at 4:40 p.m.

"It was an electrical short circuit that sparked the fire, and made larger by the highly combustible curtains," Cordeta told justice reporters.

He said the fire destroyed parts of the ceiling, curtains and wallpapers of the session hall.

The fire forced justices who are rarely seen in public out into the parking lot.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno said the justices were having a meeting when they noticed smoke coming out from one of the conference rooms in the building.

He said the justices and court employees quickly moved out of the building. No one was hurt during the evacuation.

A TIME TO REFLECT:
FOR TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, GOOD GOVERNANCE - A CLEAN AND HONEST 2007 ELECTIONS

THE CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH (COPW) WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

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The Office of The President, Cabinet Secretaries, Economic Managers, Regulatory Boards - for their continued cooperation in providing us with data and information that enables us to formulate positions that affect the public.

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The Senate - where COPW has a very good working relationship.

A CLEAN ELECTION IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE A 6.7% GDP GROWTH RATE

Once again, the Consumer & Oil Price Watch renews its commitment to the Filipino consumer to pursue the principles of transparency, accountability and good governance.

Accordingly, we believe the key to achieving a **6.7% GDP growth rate** in 2007 is **through economic reforms and a clean and honest May 14 elections.**

Without these two, we may miss the opportunity to show the world that the Philippines is capable of rising above today's challenges and turning into a major economic player, not only within the region but in the global arena.

IN THIS LIGHT, WE CALL ON:

THE ELECTORATE - to vote wisely and choose their candidates based on their integrity and competence and NOT on their mere popularity and use of political machinery.

THE COMELEC - to demonstrate to the people its integrity and greater resolve to conduct a clean and honest election.

A COMELEC perceived as rotten destroys the faith of the people in elections and in popular democracy. When that happens, it undermines the legitimacy of elected public officials, leading to instability and slow economic growth.

THE CANDIDATES - to show civility to their rivals, to stick to substantive issues, and to respect the ballot rather than resort to tactics unworthy of the respect and trust of the people.

Candidates worthy of the people's vote must practice the highest degree of statesmanship. Divisive partisanship and destructive personality politics will only divide our people.

LET US ALL WORK TOGETHER TO BRING BACK CREDIBILITY TO OUR ELECTIONS

COPW urges church groups, business organizations, civic associations, and private citizens to work hand-in-hand in ensuring clean, credible, and honest elections this May.

We encourage cooperation, teamwork and vigilance starting from the precinct level.

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45 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP. Former Batangas Gov. Tony Leviste and Rafael de las Alas in happier times. REPRODUCTION PHOTO

Leviste charged with homicide

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FORMER BATANGAS GOV. ANTONIO "Tony" Leviste was charged with homicide yesterday for the death of his trusted aide Rafael de las Alas three days ago.

Settling for the lesser offense as they lacked evidence for murder, Makati police officials filed the charges before the Makati City Prosecutor's Office as they concluded that Leviste, estranged husband of former Sen. Loren Legarda, "could be held liable" for homicide based on evidence police had gathered from the crime scene and from witnesses.

"We believe the victim went inside the room of the governor armed with a 9mm pistol and maybe they had an argument that's why he was shot. At the crime scene, we saw that he (De las Alas) had pulled his gun and his 9mm was pointed to the left side," Almoguerra told reporters after filing the complaint.

"He was ready to fire. We believe that based on the ballistics examination, his gun jammed. We believe he was about to fire. *Baka naunahan lang s'ya ni gov*(Perhaps, the governor beat him to the draw)," he said.

The victim's daughter, 41-year-old Dina Sanchez, acted as private complainant in the criminal case. As the case was being filed, Sanchez went to the National Bureau of Investigation to ask them to look into the shooting.

Second assistant city prosecutor Henry Salazar, the assigned fiscal, undertook inquest proceedings on Leviste at room 710 of the Makati Medical Center, where he has been confined since he surrendered on Friday because of a heart condition. During the 15-minute proceedings where the media were excluded, Leviste was formally notified of the charges.

An inquest will determine whether homicide charges police filed against Leviste will be elevated to court, modified or dismissed.

De las Alas was found dead between 12 noon and 1 p.m. on Friday inside Leviste's office on the ninth floor of the LPL Towers in Legaspi Village, a busy commercial hub in the financial center. Police said the 68-year-old longtime aide of Leviste was found seated behind a table, his right hand clutching a 9mm pistol.

Leviste surrendered three hours later at the Makati Medical Center, where he was rushed for hypertension. He has yet to give a detailed account of the incident.

According to an autopsy report by Chief Insp. Voltaire Nulud, chief medico-legal officer of the Southern Police District Crime Laboratory, all of the victim's fatal wounds were downward shots: one on the left side of his forehead, another just below his left eye with an exit wound behind his right earlobe, one on his left cheek which punctured his neck, and another just above the nape.

DANTE Jimenez of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) confers with Nazareth and Dina, children of the late Efren de las Alas at the NBI on Monday. INQUIRER PHOTO/JOAN BONDOC

De las Alas children ask NBI to probe killing

By Margaux C. Ortiz

UNHAPPY WITH HOW THE Makati police investigated the death of Rafael de las Alas, longtime aide of former Batangas Gov. Antonio "Tony" Leviste, the victim's children yesterday asked the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to conduct a parallel investigation on the case.

"We are dissatisfied with the initial investigation," De las Alas' daughter, Dina Sanchez, told reporters at the NBI.

Sanchez, 41, lamented that the police had yet to provide them copies of the death certificate, autopsy and medico-legal reports, three days after the tragedy.

Leviste admitted to having shot De las Alas in the former's office at the LPL Towers, Legaspi Village in Makati City.

Leviste later surrendered to the police, claiming he had shot his aide "in self-defense."

Sanchez told NBI Director Nestor Mantaring that the police had promised to give them the documents last Saturday. "We are still waiting for the official report on the circumstances surrounding our father's death."

She complained that the police took so long to contact them after their father was shot. "It took a concerned building tenant to call my brother Nazareth at around 2:30 p.m.."

Sanchez said she heard reports that the building employees were allegedly gathered in a room immediately after the incident.

"We also heard that the employees' cell phones were confiscated, so no one was able to contact us," she said.

Nazareth, 40, on the other hand, said the doctor who conducted the autopsy told him that De las Alas was shot four times and tested negative for alcohol.

"My father did not drink (alcohol) because of his many ailments which included hypertension and prostate problems," he said.

Nazareth also disclosed that no one among the building staff was willing to talk about the incident.

"We just want the NBI to find out what really happened and what [charge] should be filed against [Leviste]," he said. "We are shocked that 45 years of friendship [between Leviste and De las Alas] could end like this."

Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) founding chair Dante Jimenez, who accompanied the De las Alas siblings to the NBI, said the bureau should dig deeper into the case—including Leviste's personal life, business dealings and love affairs.

"We feel that Rafael knew too many secrets," Jimenez said. "The family believes that he was murdered."

The VACC official also lambasted Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay for meddling in the police investigation and declaring the case closed.

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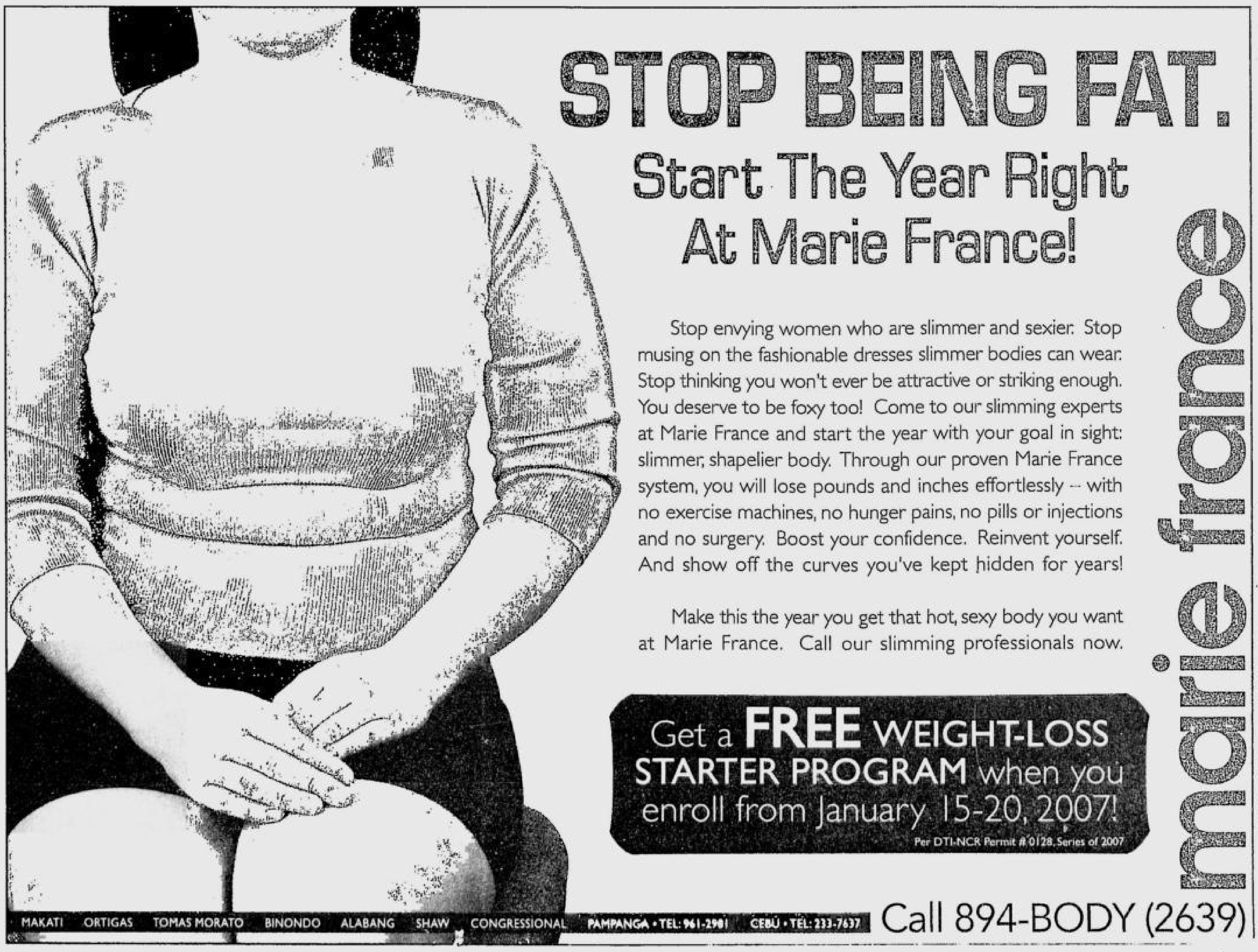

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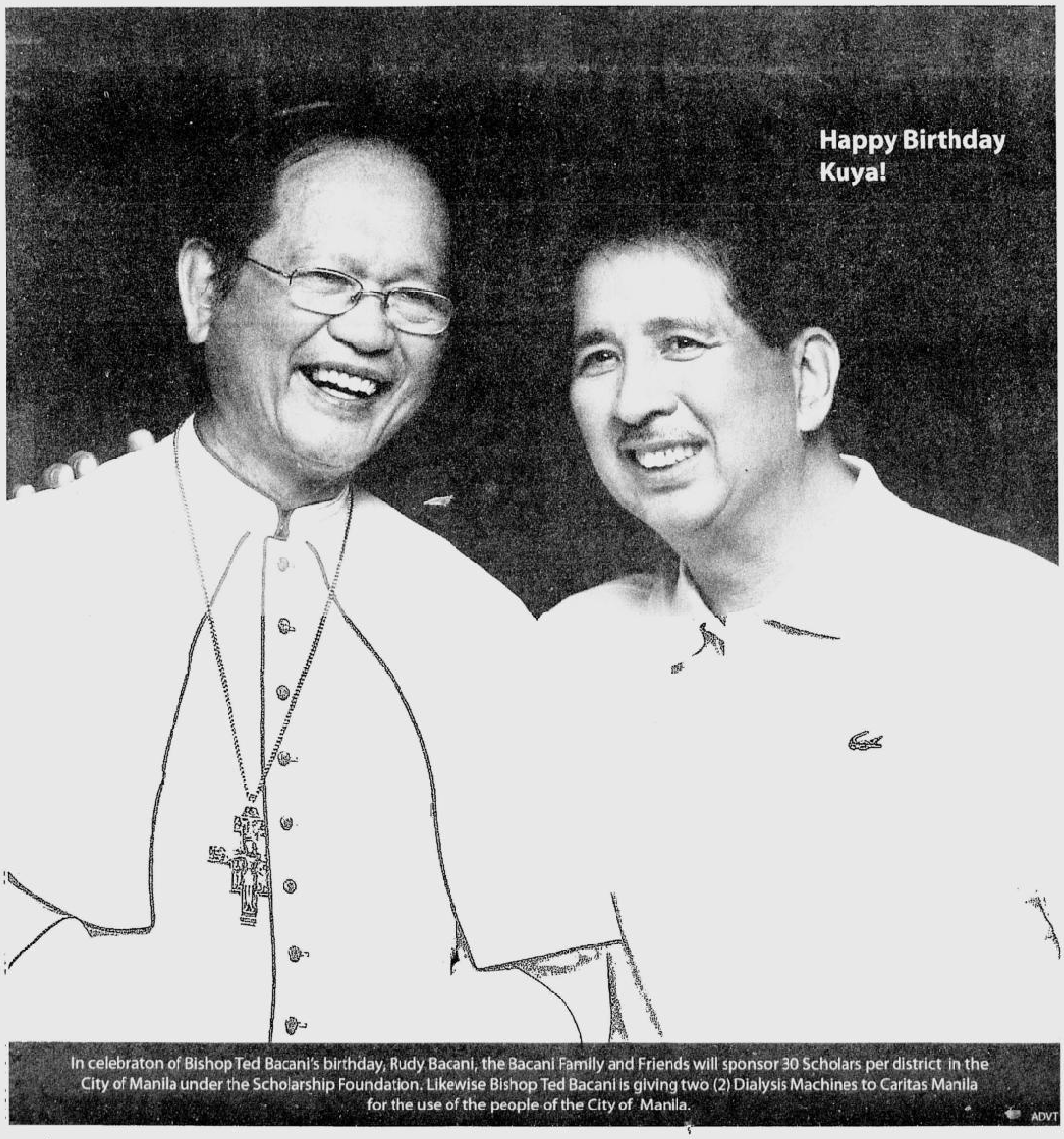
Happy Birthday Kuya!

In celebraton of Bishop Ted Bacani's birthday, Rudy Bacani, the Bacani Family and Friends will sponsor 30 Scholars per district in the City of Manila under the Scholarship Foundation. Likewise Bishop Ted Bacani is giving two (2) Dialysis Machines to Caritas Manila for the use of the people of the City of Manila.

ADVT

Ecop laments politics in wages

THE EMPLOYERS Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) yesterday urged the government to strengthen the country's wage-setting mechanism and veer away from politics when it comes to setting wage policies.

Ecop president Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. said lawmakers should aim to empower the various regional tripartite wage and productivity boards.

"Empowering the regional wage boards in determining the minimum wage and ensuring the participation of parties concerned in the process is a step towards making wage adjustments more acceptable without being counterproductive," he said in a statement issued on Monday.

"To fuel growth in a market economy like the Philippines, we should veer away from political interference in the labor market, particularly labor-management relations and wage and income policy," he added.

He said that minimum wages should serve "as a safety net to the poorest of wage earners in an environment where collective bargaining is weak."

RA 6727, or Wage Rationalization Act, states that there should be minimum government intervention in wage-setting and that the primary mode of setting wages should be through collective bargaining, he said.

For his part, Ecop chair Miguel Varela said minimum wage should only cover the workers who needed it most, or the unskilled and unorganized workers in smaller establishments.

He added that wage rates "should be linked to skills and qualifications, with wage increase as a function of skills acquisition, competency, and productivity improvement."

Abigail L. Ho

NDF claims gov't behind bombings

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—The National Democratic Front claimed over the weekend that the Arroyo administration was behind the recent bombings in key cities in Mindanao.

In an e-mailed statement, Rubi del Mundo, NDF spokesperson, said the recent attacks were aimed at justifying the passage of an antiterrorism bill in Congress and the forging of a counterpart pact by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) members.

Del Mundo said the Mindanao bombings served to push foreign delegates of the ongoing Asean summit to sign a convention urging its members to improve international cooperation and share intelligence information against terrorist organizations.

"The Philippines and the Asean (were driven to) orchestrate state terrorism, justify the war on terror, and adopt measures to stifle the opposition and civil liberties in the guise of antiterrorism," she said. *Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

NPA goes high-tech in ‘poll tax’ collection

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—EVERYONE IS GOING HIGH-tech these days.

The communist New People's Army in Quezon province has started collecting "permit to campaign" (PTC) fees from officials running in the May elections, a Quezon town mayor said Sunday.

Unlike in the past, however, the NPA now conducts collection negotiations through mobile phones and, in some cases, via the Internet.

"I was contacted by an NPA cadre sometime last month and informed of the new process. I was told that once the initial contact by a duly authorized rebel representative had been made, each candidate will be given a password to authenticate succeeding talks over the phone," the mayor who requested anonymity for security reasons, told the INQUIRER in an interview.

He also asked that his municipality not be identified.

The source said candidates that had Internet access would be contacted through their e-mail addresses for more detailed instructions.

He said the NPA emissary had several mobile phone numbers.

"But our assigned passwords [would] assure us that we're always talking to the same person," he said.

"Once the negotiations are over, the NPA will furnish us with a bank account number where we will deposit our payments," the local official said.

"It seems the NPA is now taking [extra] safety measures. They now avoid face-to-face talks. But it'll be much better for us. Talking with them is quite a [nerve-wracking experience]. We don't know what could happen during [face-to-face] negotiations," he said.

He told the INQUIRER that in his last mobile phone talk with the spokesperson of the Ma. Teresa de Leon Command in Quezon, he was told there was a plan to change the PTC collection process.

But he did not divulge the details of the new plan.

The local NPA command spokesperson could not be contacted for comment. Neither could the rebels' national spokesperson, Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal.

The source admitted that he paid P30,000 in PTC fees in the last elections.

"They also asked me for groceries, medicines and a medical kit," he said.

"The NPA emissary during the last election was a female cadre. But I learned that she was killed in an encounter with the military last year. She was a good negotiator, very persuasive and convincing," he said.

The communist movement, through the NPA, traditionally collects PTC fees during election periods.

Candidates who refuse or fail to make payments either in cash or in kind face harassment and even attack by the rebel group.

The PTC amounts vary, depending on the position a candidate is seeking.

According to the local official, the rebels suffered a huge defeat in his municipality last year.

"Some of their best cadres in our [area] were killed in encounters. Despite that, however, they still imposed PTC fees. We could not do anything but accede and negotiate for a smaller amount," he said.

With the successive typhoons that recently ravaged his town, the mayor said he would haggle for a smaller PTC this year.

"I also spend from my own pocket. But I am sure the NPA will listen. In our experience, the rebel emissary is most often understanding," he said.

One Quezon official who will seek reelection has asked the communist rebels to "get rid of pseudo-PTC fee collectors."

"Most of us are willing to pay but we want to be sure that we're giving the money to the right person. Fake NPA collectors abound every election," said the official, a councilor in one of the towns in Quezon.

Another reelectionist candidate, however, said he would no longer pay the PTC.

"I've had enough of their extortion activities. Our entire slate has agreed not to entertain the PTC fee demand. We might as well seek the protection of the police and the military in our area. These terrorists operating in our place no longer have that intimidating [a] force," said the official from the central part of the province.

The military has urged candidates in the May polls not to pay the PTC fees, saying this was tantamount to extortion.

Military intelligence reports have said the NPA had become increasingly dependent on its extortion activities to finance its rebellion as its foreign funding sources had dried up due to the decline of communist movements all over the world.

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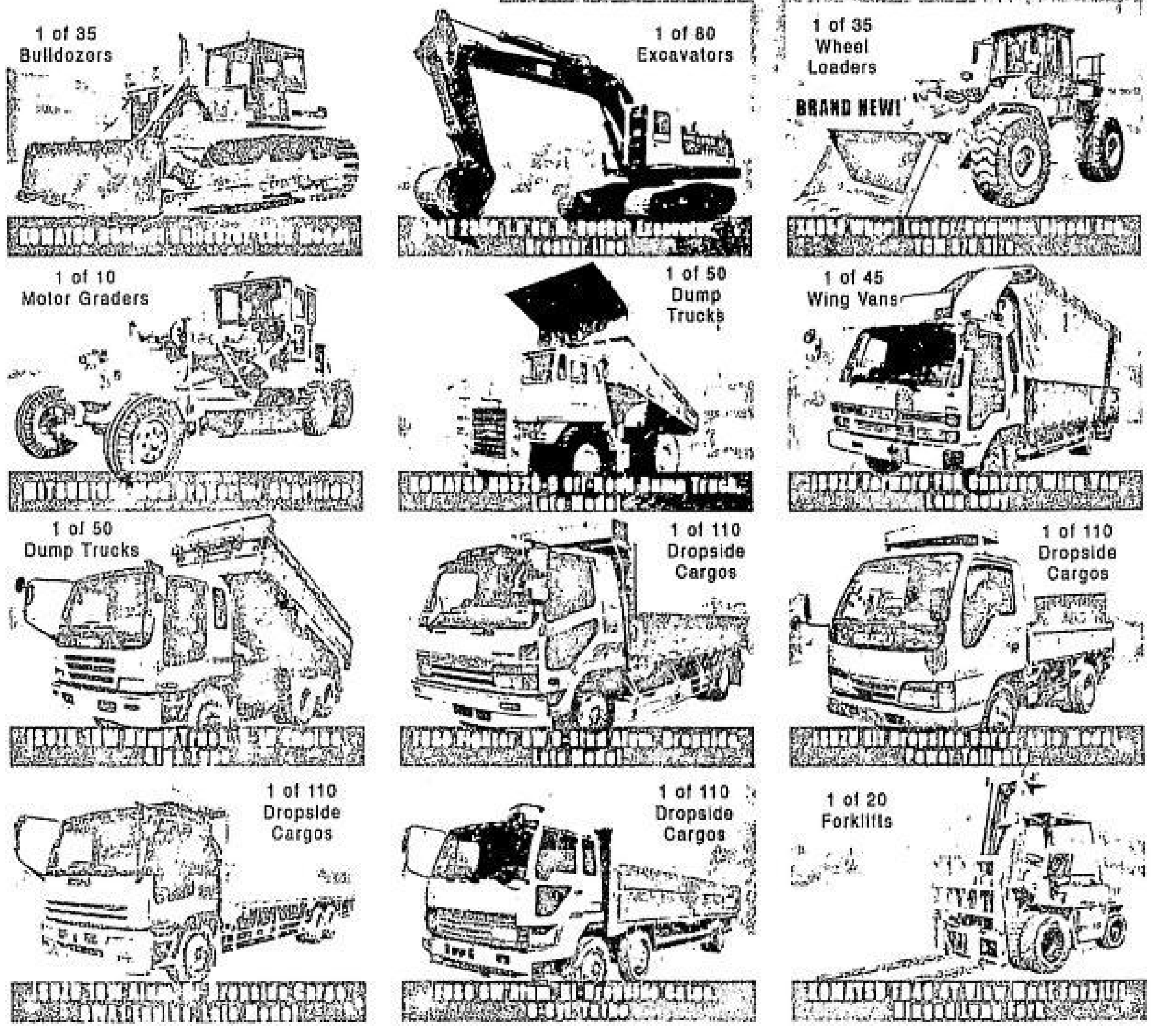

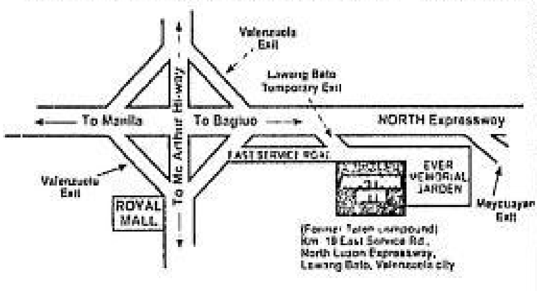

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Main points of Asean, East Asian summits

ASIAN LEADERS MET JAN. 12-15 to discuss a variety of issues involving counterterrorism, security, trade, energy, Burma and North Korea. Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations met on Friday and Saturday.

On Sunday, leaders of the 10-member regional grouping held separate meetings with each of Asean's dialogue partners—China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand. On Monday, the leaders of the 16 countries held the second East Asia Summit.

Here are main points of the two summits:

Asean summit

- Blueprint approved for Asean's first legally binding charter since its founding in 1967. It would turn the group into a legal entity with binding rules and regulations, and end the tradition of consensus decision-making in all cases.
- Declaration approved to protect the rights of migrant workers.
- Antiterror convention signed to make it easier to track and extradite suspects.
- Date for establishing the Asean Economic Community to be brought forward five years to 2015. It will create the free movement of goods, services, investment and skilled labor across the region of almost 570 million.
- "Serious concern" was expressed over the impact of high oil prices on economic growth and an agreement was reached to deepen energy cooperation.
- Issuance of statement that "encourages" Burma (Myanmar) to make greater progress toward national reconciliation and to free detainees and talk to all parties. Asean said Burma must show it could tackle this issue to preserve its credibility.
- Issuance of statement that urges North Korea to desist from further nuclear tests, take firm steps to scrap its atomic program and address humanitarian concerns—a reference to the plight of Japanese abducted by Pyongyang.
- Issuance of statement that calls on international lenders to consider swapping debt for equity in aid projects to enable poor countries to reduce poverty.

East Asia summit

- The Cebu Declaration on Energy Security in which the leaders pledged to work together to save energy and develop new supplies to counter the economic threat posed by unstable world oil prices. The key goals of the pact—improve efficiency and environmental performance of fossil fuel use and promote conservation; reduce dependence on conventional fuels through use of hydropower, renewable energy systems, biofuel production and civilian nuclear power; mitigate greenhouse gas emission through effective policies and measures; and encourage investment in energy infrastructure through greater private sector involvement.
- Leaders urged North Korea to scrap its nuclear weapons, tackle serious food shortages and account for foreigners kidnapped by its regime in recent decades.
- Leaders welcomed Asean's efforts toward further integration, resolved to shrink regional development gaps and called for an early resumption of the Doha Round of talks on freeing up world trade.

Reports from AFP, Reuters

East Asian leaders to promote biofuel

From page A1

oil crisis of the 1970s.

The East Asia conclave came two days after the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) completed its annual summit, vowing to strengthen political solidarity, fight terrorism and create a free trade zone by 2015.

The Asean leaders and their counterparts from six Asian economic powerhouses also pledged to pursue investments in regional infrastructure through greater private sector involvement.

Civilian nuclear power

The declaration calls for moves to improve energy efficiency and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, while urging countries to expand renewable energy systems and biofuel production and "for interested parties, civilian nuclear power."

It also calls for mitigating greenhouse gas emission and ensuring a stable supply of energy "through investments in regional infrastructure such as the Asean power grid and the trans-Asean gas pipeline."

The leaders also agreed to explore strategic fuel stockpiling to reduce their dependence on oil imports, according to the document.

China has been seeking greater influence over key energy markets while striving to alleviate worries over its huge and growing appetite for oil.

"China attaches great importance to energy security and energy cooperation," Premier Wen Jiabao said in a speech to the summit, adding that his nation "will continue to rely on itself to meet its energy need and priority will be given to raising energy efficiency."

Wen said there needed to be stronger dialogue on energy security as well as increased conservation and research on clean and alternative sources.

Sharing Japan's experience

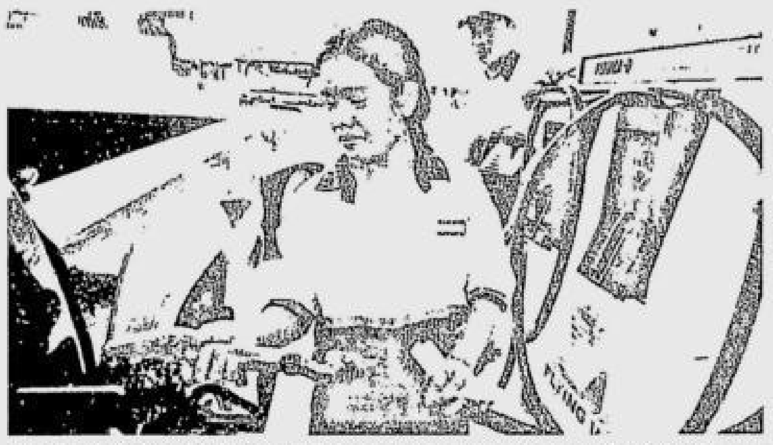
"Japan has improved energy efficiency at a rate of 37 percent in the past three decades since the oil shock ... For the purpose of contributing to Asia's energy-saving efforts, we would like to share our experience," a Japanese official quoted Abe as telling the meeting.

Tokyo's aid package includes accepting 1,500 engineers and researchers from other nations as trainees and setting up an energy-saving center in Asia based on Japanese technology.

In addition, the plan includes the establishment of a research center for biofuel, as well as a support center for efficient use of coal energy.

Following Abe's proposal, other leaders pointed out the need for ministerial-level meetings to work out the specifics of the plan, the Japanese official said.

"One leader said that securing marine transportation for energy is also important, namely counter-piracy activities," he said without giving details.


AN ATTENDANT pumps biodiesel into a passenger van in Manila. AFP

Hydropower

"Another leader from a less developed country pointed out that inducing investment in East Asia for the development of hydropower is also important to eradicate poor access to energy," he said.

Asean, which groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, held its own summit on Saturday and talks with other East Asian leaders on Sunday.

6-party talks

The bloc agreed to set up a free trade zone by 2015.

The leaders expressed concern over North Korea's nuclear test and urged Pyongyang to desist from further tests and "take concrete and effective steps" to implement a 2005 agreement in which it pledged to disarm in exchange for security guarantees and aid, President Macapagal-Arroyo said.

They also emphasized support for the so-called six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear weapons program "and reaffirmed conviction that the talks should result in more tangible progress in addressing outstanding issues," Ms Arroyo told reporters.

Earlier Monday, China's Wen told reporters that countries involved in international talks on North Korea must renew efforts to overcome differences and resolve the issue.

Despite lobbying by South Korea to downplay the alleged abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea, the leaders urged Pyongyang to "actively address the security and humanitarian concerns of the international community, including food shortages and ... the abduction issue."

Bird flu

The leaders also vowed to work closer in addressing bird flu and natural disasters.

The East Asia summit was first held in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005 as India, Australia and New Zealand sought more active roles in regional issues.

The second East Asia summit is being held in a more constructive atmosphere than last year as Beijing and Tokyo used the meeting to further mend ties.

"This year is more focused on substance. Last year it was like a house-warming party, everybody came and got to know each other," Asean Secretary General Ong Keng Yong told reporters. *Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters*

Big business praises trade thrusts ...

From page A1

built power plants for two of his businesses in the Philippines—petrochemicals and textiles—and this brought down their power cost to P2.75/kWh.

He warned that if the Philippines did not move to improve its business environment, "we will be a country that creates nothing and imports everything."

Francis Chua, president of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc., said local manufacturing companies had always complained about the high cost of power in the country but with very little results.

Fighting chance

"We are pricing ourselves out of competition. Power is the single biggest reason why we cannot compete with our Asean neighbors. What more against advanced economies of East Asia?" Chua said in an interview.

Chua believes that the Philippines would have a fighting chance to compete in manufacturing should the Asean free trade area go up in 2015 and should China join the regional bloc. Agreements on these projects were signed during the 12th Asean Summit.

Gokongwei said he was "very proud" at the turnout of the Cebu summit in which his adopted hometown proved that it could host such a world-class event.

He said the summit should put Cebu more prominently on the world map. "People will notice us more. More investors will come here, more tourists will come here for conventions and recreation."

"I've been saying it all along, instead of having a market of 86 million, we will have market of 500 million. It's a bigger market with economies of scale. That is what we (his conglomerate) are doing now," said Gokongwei.

RP leads efforts to tap alternative energy

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CEBU—THE PHILIPPINES IS leading Southeast Asian nations in efforts toward the large-scale use of alternative energy sources such as biofuel and hydropower.

Donald G. Dee, one of three Filipinos in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Business Advisory Council, said the Asean BAC over the weekend formed a group that would spearhead initiatives for the use of *Jatropha curcas*, locally known as *tuba-tuba*, to make clean diesel.

"I was designated to lead this group since the Philippines is the most advanced in Asean in this subject," he said. "We want to know if biodiesel with jatropha oil could be used in a large scale throughout the region."

The Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Plant Industry is identifying places in the country where the plant has varieties that bear more fruits.

Jatropha is also abundant in Indonesia, the only member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in the region but which is itself a net importer of oil.

In remote areas of the Philippines, people still use jatropha seeds strung together as lamps or candles.

Earlier this month, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the Biofuels Act. The law promotes the production of ethanol as a gasoline blend.

Other Asean members with sugar-producing regions are also looking at ethanol production as a viable industry and source of biofuel.

Ms Arroyo yesterday said leaders attending the East Asia Summit agreed on the need to improve the efficiency of fossil fuels and to diversify energy supply.

"(We) also agreed to pay close attention to the security, environmental, health and safety dimensions of the energy sector," she said.

"(We) tasked our respective officials concerned with looking into regional nuclear safety regime."

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said it was up to each country in the region to decide whether or not to tap nuclear energy for civilian use.

As for the Philippines, Lotilla said the country would keep nuclear energy as an option because authorities would still need to keep abreast of developments in this field, including the disposal of nuclear waste.

The energy secretary said the East Asian leaders did not adopt a proposal for their governments to put up strategic oil reserves.

"Some countries would rather not have stockpiles at this time because this might add up to the volatility of prices," he said.

RP, China to sign 19 farm deals ...

From page A1

projects were not immediately available.

Yap said an agreement with the Department of Agriculture of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region involved the development of an initial 40,000 hectares for cassava and sugar in the Philippines for the production of ethanol for export to China.

China and the Philippines are both trying to cut their dependence on imported oil by growing crops, such as sugar, cassava, corn and coconut oil, for the production of alternative biofuel.

Yap said a deal that would allow Filipino exporters to enter China's P49-billion ($1-billion) fruit market would also be signed during Premier Wen's visit.

In an agreement to be signed with the Jiangnan Wholesale Market, the Philippines will be allowed to sell fruits such as papaya, bananas, pineapples and mangoes in the largest fruit and vegetable area in China.

"These agreements are expected to further reinforce existing trade and investment ties between Manila and Beijing and herald what China has described as the golden age of bilateral relations between our countries," Yap said.

In great shape

At the 16-country East Asia Summit in Cebu, Premier Wen said that China was rising in peace—a formulation Beijing has repeatedly used in the past to calm concerns about its growing might on the international stage.

"China's relations with its neighbors are now in great shape," he said. "China's policy of good-neighborliness and friendship has served the common interests of all the countries concerned. This policy will remain unchanged."

Many Asian countries have expressed concern about China over everything—from its economy, which is rising at breakneck speed, to its cheap products and huge military spending.

But Wen said his country had "embarked upon a sound path, the path of peaceful development. China pursues development through peaceful cooperation and endeavors to uphold world peace as it develops itself."

Wen and other leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Sunday signed a landmark cooperation deal to open market access in its lucrative services sectors—a major step toward the ambitious goal of establishing a free trade area involving China and its Southeast Asian neighbors within the next 10 years.

With China's economic and political influence in the region rising, Wen said it still needed friends in the region to meet its developmental goals.

Not a threat

China has long insisted that its rise as an economic power poses no threat to other nations because it first needs to address a range of internal problems, such as strains on the environment and resources, and the wealth gap between urban and rural areas.

Wen said China's expanding economic might had helped contribute to stability in the region but many ordinary people were still living in poverty, and his nation needed to focus on improving their livelihoods.

The country "has a population of 1.3 billion and its per capita GDP is lower than 100th in the world," he said.

"In China, there is a serious imbalance between urban and rural areas," Wen said. "For many years to come, development will remain a top priority for us."

During his meetings with Asian leaders in the past few days, Wen repeatedly emphasized the importance of building political mutual trust, economic and trade ties as well as cooperation on energy and defense. *With reports from Reuters and AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, January 16, 2007
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 6:10-20
Gospel: Mark 2:23-28

One Sabbath he was walking through grainfields. As his disciples walked along with him, they began to pick the heads of grain and crush them in their hands. Then the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Look! they are doing what is forbidden on the Sabbath!"

And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did in his time of need, when he and his men were very hungry? He went into the house of God when Abiathar was High Priest and ate the bread of offering, which only the priests are allowed to eat, and he also gave some to the men who were with him." Then Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is master even of the Sabbath."

Commentary

Our God is a sure and firm anchor, and our hope is in Jesus, risen from the dead and ascended to God. Jesus is our forerunner, John the Baptist was to him. He goes before us, mindful of all we do and our service to his holy people. We are to live with zeal, with passion and grace on behalf of others. Jesus teaches us that we are to live in obedience, not just to laws, but to the needs of others. There is a new rule: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. That is why the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath." Jesus is master of all things, and our master—we must serve the spirit and the heart of the law and be attentive to people first, not the outward manifestation of what appears to be permitted or not permitted.

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US troops engaged in combat in South, says activist group

Independent probe sought on possible violation of Constitution

US TROOPS HAVE ENGAGED IN COMBAT operations in the Philippines despite an arrangement limiting them to humanitarian work and training Filipino soldiers fighting al-Qaida-linked guerrillas, activists said Monday.

The activist group Focus on the Global South, citing US military writings, doctrines and eyewitness accounts, called for an independent investigation into whether the alleged operations violated the Philippine Constitution.

US Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop disputed the allegation.

"Visiting US troops in the Philippines advise, assist, share information with their Philippine counterparts, but they do not engage in combat and they have no direct role in combat operations. Any combat operations are 100 percent Filipino," he told The Associated Press.

A US Special Forces contingent has been deployed in the South since 2002, nearly a year after the Muslim extremist group Abu Sayyaf kidnapped three Americans and 17 Filipinos from a resort. One of the Americans was beheaded soon after the kidnapping, and another was killed during a US-backed military rescue operation the following year.

Lussenhop said the number of Special Forces troops average "no more than a few hundred at any one time."

Herbert Docena, who wrote the report for Focus on the Global South, which promotes human rights and fair trade, said US troops may also be violating the Philippine constitutional ban on the stationing of foreign military bases in the country, since they have not left the South since they arrived five years ago.

Lussenhop, however, said the facilities and camps being used by the Americans were only temporary.

US military presence in this former American colony is a sensitive issue that recently heightened following the conviction of a US Marine on rape charges. The Marine was not part of the US task force.

Docena said US official and military documents show the US forces in the Philippines are deployed as part of Washington's global campaign against terror, and reportedly confirm the US "right to strike what it considers threats even inside countries that they are not at war with."

He also said eyewitnesses allegedly claim to have seen US troops in the vicinity of hostilities, operating military equipment, defusing land mines and performing other war-related activities.

Docena said US troops also operate spy planes—including an unmanned one that crashed last year—over areas of hostilities.

Muslim Prof. Octavio Dinampo said he personally saw US troops in November 2005 provide a "sort of a blocking force" in a coastal village as Filipino soldiers pursued Abu Sayyaf gunmen in Indanan town on southern Jolo island, a known militant stronghold.

Last year, Dinampo said he saw two vehicles carrying US troops in a convoy of Filipino soldiers heading to an alleged Abu Sayyaf camp also on Jolo.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, head of the Senate defense committee, said US troops are supposed to remain only in the headquarters or camps of Philippine troops they have been assigned to and are explicitly banned from joining Filipino troops in combat patrols or operations.

US forces, however, are allowed to fire back if they come under attack, he said.

AN AMERICAN soldier stands guard at a wharf in Jolo, Sulu. FILE PHOTO

Abra solon slay suspect retracts

By DJ Yap and Miko Morelos

FORMER ARMY SGT. RUFINO PANDAY, A suspect in the murder of Abra Rep. Luis Bersamin Jr., yesterday retracted his confession that he took part in the crime and his naming of Abra Gov. Vicente Valera as the mastermind, claiming he had been coerced into signing the document.

In a dramatic turnaround, Panday said it was not true, as he originally stated, that he had served as "lookout" in the Dec. 16 killings of Bersamin and his bodyguard at the Mt. Carmel Church in Quezon City. He claimed he was not even in Metro Manila at the time of the incident.

In an interview over dzBB radio, Panday, accompanied by his lawyer, Galileo Angeles, said he had been forced into signing the statement, in which he also tagged Valera as the alleged brains behind the murders. He said Valera was not involved.

Panday had earlier stated that Freddie Dupo, one of the prime suspects, had told him of a P5-million contract for a hit on Bersamin. The contract was purportedly being funded by Valera, a charge the governor had denied.

Panday declined to directly name the person or persons who had forced him to confess, only implying that police investigators were involved.

Supt. Remigio Gregorio of the criminal investigation unit, which has custody of Panday, declined to comment on Panday's retraction. "I have not heard his statements," he told the INQUIRER.

But in an earlier interview, Gregorio had said that "from the very start, there was always a possibility that Panday might retract."

Last week, Panday's son, Benjie, had also claimed his father had been tortured into confessing an involvement in the murder. "My father told me (the policemen) were beating him up and giving him electric shocks," he said.

Panday had also indicated that he would rather be detained at the Quezon City jail than at Camp Karingal out of fear he would be "manhandled," his lawyer Angeles said at a court hearing last week.

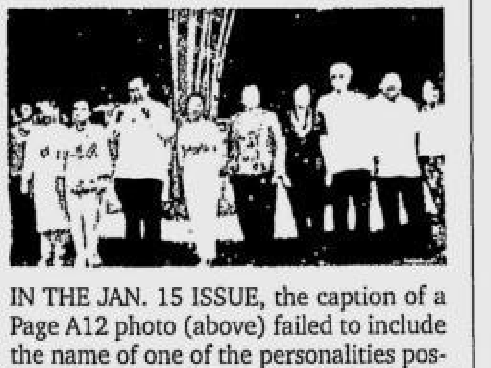
"We ask that my client be brought to the city jail because there are unconfirmed reports that he's being manhandled (at Karingal)," Angeles had told Judge Rosanna Fe Romero Maglaya of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 88.

But Quezon City Police District director Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula Jr. said Panday needed to be moved to the PNP Custodial Center at Camp Crame for "security reasons."

He had expressed worry that "somebody might get to him," and that they might lose him as a "vital witness."

The INQUIRER tried to talk to Panday from his detention cell at Camp Karingal yesterday, but the investigators denied a request to interview him. Police said they would issue a statement on Panday's retraction soon.

Correction



IN THE JAN. 15 ISSUE, the caption of a Page A12 photo (above) failed to include the name of one of the personalities posing at the Asean Grove. Sixth from left is Rosie Lovely Romulo, wife of Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo. She is the woman beside presidential daughter Luli Arroyo.

* * *

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Asean plan to tighten discipline worries Burma

CEBU—BURMA (MYANMAR) IS worried about efforts by Southeast Asia's main bloc to create new rules that could allow for disciplinary action against errant members, Indonesia's foreign minister said Monday.

Leaders of the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed at their annual summit over the weekend to let a high-level panel draft a joint regional charter that could be completed by late 2007.

Government-appointed advisers say members that breach Asean's principles could have their rights and privileges suspended—or even be expelled in extreme cases.

Burma has been internationally criticized because of its failure to democratize and to release political prisoners, and its possible objections to proposals in the charter could block Asean, which currently practices decision-making by consensus, from adopting any strict regulations.

"From what they (Burma) mentioned at the various discussions, I can say that it is an issue of concern to them," Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda told The Associated Press on the sidelines of a broader regional summit of 16 Asian leaders, including Burma's Prime Minister Gen. Soe Win.

Wirayuda stressed the Asean charter was still in the planning stage, but added that Indonesia "supports basically the idea of strengthening the compliance of member states to the principles, policies and decisions of Asean."

Indonesia also has proposed that Asean establish a three-country committee tasked with finding new ways to constructively engage Burma and spur it to fulfill its promise to implement democratic reforms, Wirayuda said.

Asean cannot abandon Burma because the region's interests are closely linked with the nation, Wirayuda said, pointing out that the issue has become an international concern.

Washington had introduced a UN resolution—vetoed by China and Russia on Friday—calling on Burma to release all political prisoners and speed up progress toward democracy. Beijing and Moscow argued that the UN's most powerful body was not the right place to discuss Burma because it does not pose a threat to international peace and security.

Burma's current junta took power in 1988 after crushing a pro-democracy movement. In 1990, it refused to hand over power when Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won a landslide election victory. Since then, the Nobel laureate has been in and out of detention, and she is currently kept in near-solitary confinement at her home. *AP*

Bring Asean to grass roots, GMA urges delegates

From page A1

Workers and the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Nursing Services among Asean countries.

She said progress was made on issues of energy independence, human rights, economic integration and social justice.

"The Asean-China Agreement on Trade and Services inched us closer to free trade in the region, cutting barriers on services such as telecommunications, transportation and tourism," she added.

In a remark apparently meant to correct previous media reports on the twin summits, Ms Arroyo pointed out that the leaders of "17 great nations"—not just the 16 representing the Asean and the EAS participants—flew to Cebu for the historic meetings.

The 17th nation was Timor Leste, which signed a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with Asean.

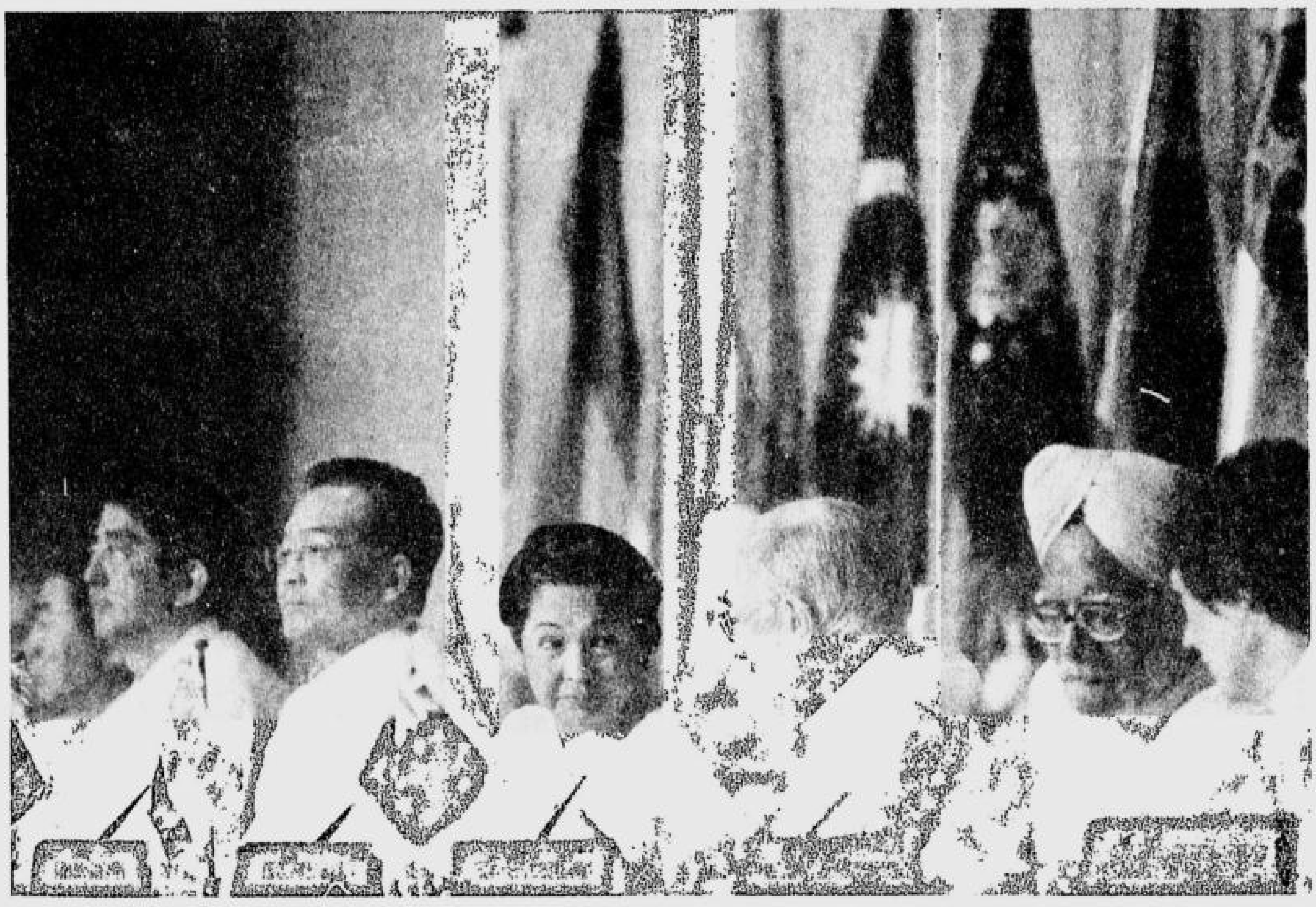
Volunteers relieved

At the CICC, organizers and the mostly Cebuano army of volunteers were visibly relieved and broke into merriment as the twin summits, which were postponed last month amid bad weather and high security alerts, finally drew to a close.

Summit spokesperson Vic Lecaros said he had received feedback from the delegates saying the affair was "professionally planned and executed" and might be "hard to surpass."

"I think it's not really about our facilities—there are certainly more grandiose ones—but about the human element, our people, our smiles, our desire to make sure our guests were comfortable," he said.

The INQUIRER learned that up to 20,000 cups of coffee were served at the CICC alone on Jan. 9-15, for an event attended by 2,674 delegates and 1,620 members of the media.



HEADS of state led by President Macapagal-Arroyo pose for a souvenir photo. They included Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen, Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Boe Diono, Malaysia's Prime Minister Y.A.B. Dato Seri Abdullah Bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, South Korea's President Roh Moo-hyun, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, China's Premier Wen Jiabao, Australia's Prime Minister John Howard, India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, New Zealand's Prime Minister Helen Clark, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Burma's Prime Minsiter Lt. Gen. Soe Win, Thailand's Prime Minister Gen. Surayud Chulanont, Vietnam's Nguyen Tan Dung and Brunei's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Riot policemen, protesters skirmish

CEBU—RIOT POLICE SKIRmished with several hundred demonstrators here yesterday as 16 Asian leaders began a summit at a convention center across town.

Some 100 riot police wearing helmets and body pads used batons and shields to push back an estimated 300 leftist protesters trying to storm Malacañang sa Sugbu, a seaside compound which President Macapagal-Arroyo uses as her official residence here.

The protesters fought with their bare hands but later retreated toward a major street as their leaders began to make speeches atop a flatbed truck.

Police said they were unaware of any serious injuries on either side.

The group had marched on the government building in mid-morning behind a yellow banner that read, "Arroyo, Number One US puppet" as the Filipino leader opened the East Asia summit.

The United States itself is not involved in the meetings. *AFP*

Asean defense ministers to draft cooperation plan

By Volt Contreras

CEBU—THE DEFENSE MINistries of Asean are gathering in Manila later this month to start drafting a three-year cooperation plan against "nontraditional" security threats, days after their leaders signed a milestone convention on counterterrorism.

The discussion is expected to define the role of the military in counterterrorism, considering the matter is still principally considered a law enforcement job carried out by police, according to the spokesperson of the Asean secretariat.

The meeting, set for Jan. 25-26, advances the vision of the Asean Security Community and signifies that defense and security have "evolved from being a sensitive and even provocative subject into a legitimate realm of regional dialogue,'" MC Abad Jr. told the INQUIRER on the sidelines of the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit.

"There is now full recognition of security interdependence in the face of nontraditional threats and crimes being committed across borders and, therefore, the need for coordinated response," Abad said.

"Defense ministers in the region share the view that while our interstate relations are peaceful and stable, (we) are faced with nontraditional security issues, including terrorism, maritime security, transnational crime and even natural disasters," he noted.

He maintained that the Asean Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) "is a force of peace and security. It is not aimed against any country."

Asean leaders on Saturday signed a Convention on Counterterrorism, a legally binding document that a member of the 10-nation bloc can invoke to obtain information on, extradite and prosecute suspected terrorists operating across Asean's shared borders.

Spouses of leaders savor Cebu hospitality

From page A1

of Asean Secretary General Ong Keng Yong.

* * *

Just fatigue

South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun skipped a gala dinner during the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit due to fatigue, his spokesperson said yesterday.

The 60-year-old Roh and 15 other leaders were invited to the dinner hosted by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Sunday night.

"He was very fatigued and he and the first lady both opted out," said Roh's presidential spokesperson, Mira Sun.

Sun said she did not believe the incident caused any offense. "He apologized to the organizers and the host graciously accepted the apology."

She said Roh had "no health issues" and attended yesterday's East Asia summit.

* * *

Stop protests

Local authorities appealed to Filipino activists to stop marching through the streets of Cebu.

"If you really love the Philippines, we urge you not to push through with your plans," Philippine Tourism Authority General Manager Robert Dean S. Barbers said in a statement.

Barbers stressed that "the whole world is watching" the Philippines, and that the series of meetings in Cebu culminating in yesterday's East Asia Summit—spanning Australia and India—represented "a tremendous opportunity" to lure foreign investment to the country, which is struggling to reduce poverty.

Hundreds of left-wing protesters have held rallies nearly every day in Cebu's busiest districts, burning effigies of leaders and chanting slogans against trade liberalization and human rights violations.

* * *

Bollywood dreams

Tired of talking about trade and terrorism, Southeast Asian leaders had song-and-dance on their minds when they met with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Singh was urged to encourage India's booming Bollywood movie industry to tie up with Southeast Asian filmmakers to jointly produce and direct future big screen projects, Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath said late Sunday, after Singh held talks with Asean leaders.

Indian stars often head to Southeast Asia for exotic location shoots, and Bollywood produces more than 800 movies a year, three times more than Hollywood.

* * *

Dancing despite diarrhea

Performers and production personnel suffered more than just butterflies in their stomachs before entertaining Asia's most prominent dignitaries at a gala dinner Sunday.

Some 95 Filipinos involved in the hotel ceremony, mainly dancers, models and behind-the-scenes staffers, were stricken with food poisoning late Saturday after eating pre-packed dinners believed to have included seafood-filled noodles and grilled meat, organizers and health officials said.

Most complained of abdominal aches, vomiting and diarrhea, but they were released from a hospital Sunday in time to show a brave face at the event despite their queasy tummies, said Victoriano Lecaro, a spokesperson for the Asean summit.

* * *

Roadworthy risks

Traffic was a mess in this city. And the prime ministers of Australia and New Zealand reportedly were not taking any chances.

Both countries' ambassadors to the Philippines shipped their own official BMWs from Manila to Cebu—a 670-kilometer trip—the New Zealand Press Association and local papers reported.

Both diplomats said they needed "something totally dependable" to take Australian leader John Howard and New Zealand's Helen Clark to and from their meetings.

* * *

Excuse us

Police escorted the Asean leaders through the closed-off streets here with a message for local residents whose daily lives were disrupted: "We're sorry!"

Street vendors along convoy routes were ordered to stay away during the days of the summit meetings, while local drivers were sometimes bottled up in traffic for hours due to security concerns.

But between the blaring sirens, as the limousines of the 16 heads of state and government sped to their meetings, police shouted through loud hailers (megaphones): "Excuse us! Sorry!"

They also shouted the message many wanted to hear most of all: "Just one more day!" The summit ended yesterday. *Reports from Connie E. Fernandez and Gavin Sanson Bagares, Inquirer Visayas, AP and AFP*

Small fishers say Asean irrelevant to them

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CEBU—FISHERFOLK GROUPS from the Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand have decried the insecurity in the supply of staple food in the region as they lamented the "irrelevance" of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to small-scale fishers.

The Philippine Navy took measures so relevant to the security of the Asean summit held here that the fishers' fluvial protest action on Thursday did not get any farther than 100 meters from shore. The fishermen also failed to pull off a planned "land-based boat parade."

Arsenio N. Tanchuling, executive director of the Quezon City-based Tambuyog Development Center, echoed a Singaporean activist's analysis that Asean would become irrelevant unless it changed, adding that the Asean had long been so.

Southeast Asia relies on fishery resources for up to 70 percent of its protein needs as well as up to a 10th of the gross domestic product of each country in the region.

"Asean has long been irrelevant to small fishers since it failed to draw up, in its 40 years of existence, even a simple regional fisheries management plan that would realistically address ecosystems degradation, overfishing, depletion of fishing grounds and inequitable access to coastal resources," Tanchuling said.

"In fact, Asean's fisheries program is not just irrelevant but even a threat to a sector that 20 million small fishers (in the Philippines alone) are living on a dollar per day," he said.

Tanchuling said the bloc's current design for the fisheries sector was riddled with policies geared toward developing big businesses' market competitiveness at the expense of small producers.

Speaking for the Southeast Asia Fish for Justice Network (SEAFish), Eusebio Jacinto Jr. said such policies were quixotic and disastrous.

SEAFish is an alliance of 14 fisherfolk nongovernment and peoples' organizations with members representing groups from Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines.

"Programs to address concerns of artisanal fishers, who comprise more than 90 percent of the sector, were never mentioned in (Asean policies)," Jacinto said.

Jacinto said the sector was plagued by the depletion of fishing grounds, the destruction of coastal habitats and the continuous decline of capture fisheries' productivity. "These resulted from years of mangrove conversion to fishponds, unregulated fishing and destructive practices, all geared toward increasing commercial productivity."

These socio-environmental costs include the destruction of mangrove habitats, dislocation of artisanal fishers from their fishing grounds, and exhaustion and salinization of groundwater.

The groups say the $4.2 billion yearly profits from shrimp farming in the region are not even worth the total cost of mangrove loss, which resource economists value at a range of $5.5 billion to $7.6 billion a year for about 692,450 hectares of mangroves lost in the region—or $10,000 per hectare.

"Ironically, the artisanal fishers who gained very little from it are also the ones solely shouldering its ill effects," he said.

Jacinto added that if Asean intends to achieve competitive yet sustainable fisheries productivity, it must first abandon its current neo-liberal track and address these concerns.

Nene, Loi raise question of delicadeza in Davide oath-taking

By TJ Burgonio

HILARIO DAVIDE'S OATH-TAKING AS PERMAnent Representative to the United Nations in Cebu on Sunday ahead of his confirmation drew heavy criticisms yesterday from allies of former President Joseph Estrada in the Senate.

The former Chief Justice, who has yet to get the nod of the Commission on Appointments (CA), was sworn into the post by President Macapagal-Arroyo on the sidelines of the 12th Asean Summit in Cebu.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the oath-taking showed the Arroyo administration's lack of delicadeza.

Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito Estrada, wife of the ousted president, said that sending an unconfirmed ambassador to the UN has placed the country in a "ridiculous situation."

"It's the first time to my knowledge that a nominee assumed a diplomatic post without a CA confirmation. Davide's competence is not an issue. The rule of law and tradition are now in doubt. Don't we have delicadeza now?" Pimentel said.

Davide appeared before the CA for the first time in late December and came under intense grilling from Sen. Jinggoy Estrada mainly over his role in swearing Ms Arroyo into the presidency in January 2001 following his father's ouster.

The senator moved to further question Davide after Congress resumes sessions next week.

Ejercito, wife of the former President, said that while there was nothing wrong with Davide's swearing-in, protocol dictated that UN ambassadors had to be confirmed first before they could present their credentials to their host.

She said that since the CA hasn't approved his confirmation, Davide was in effect bypassed and holding "a void appointment."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, however, said that Davide could represent the country in the UN and "perform his functions" without any confirmation.

He, however, said Davide should be careful to avoid suffering the fate of US permanent ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, who decided not to push through with his nomination after the victorious Democrats in the Senate vowed to block it.

Davide, 71, is set to succeed Ambassador Lauro Baja, who has held the post in New York since May 2003.

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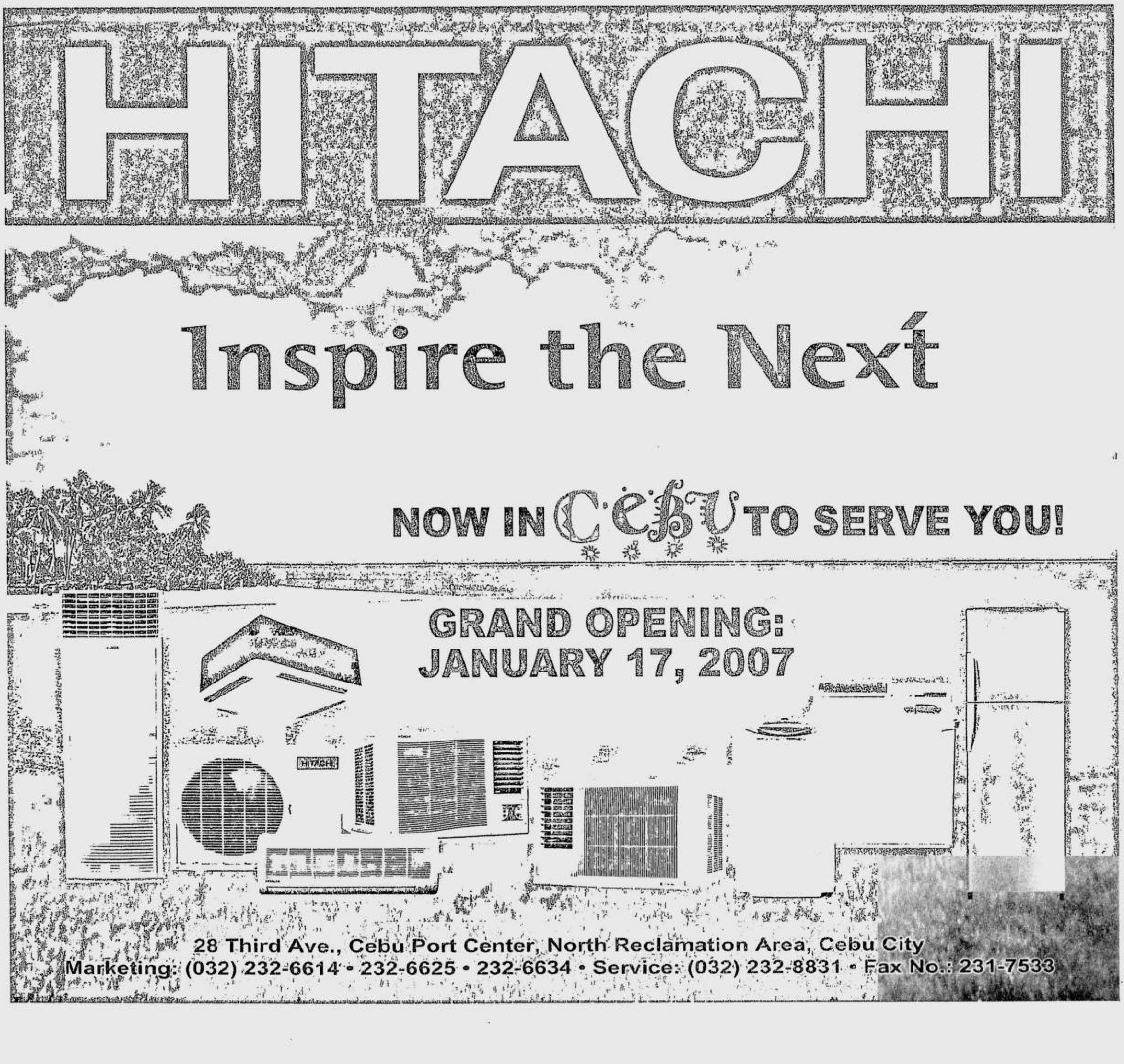

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A productive summit

EDITORIAL

THE 12TH ANNUAL SUMMIT OF THE ASSOCIATION of Southeast Asian Nations last week appears to have been its most productive in the nearly 40 years' history of the regional grouping. The agreements signed and the declarations made at the summit in Cebu strongly support the optimistic prediction of President Macapagal-Arroyo that the Asean is poised to become "a dynamo" and "a formidable bloc" in the world.

The Asean summit, among other things:

—Agreed to discuss a plan to form a more cohesive, rules-based organization similar to the European Union that is able to sanction or even expel members that do not follow its policies. The leaders promised to accelerate the establishment of the Asean Community, a stronger, more cohesive and competitive regional grouping, by 2015.

—Urged more flexibility in global trade negotiations to get the stalled Doha Round of the World Trade Organization talks back on track. The round reached an impasse after the Western and developing countries got deadlocked on major issues like agricultural subsidies, market access and tariffs on industrial goods.

—Concluded the first legally binding Convention on Counterterrorism that would make it easier to prosecute and extradite terror suspects. The Asean region has seen some of the world's deadliest terror attacks by militants seeking to create a conservative Islamic enclave.

—Endorsed a debt-for-equity plan to fund Millennium Development Goals projects of the United Nations that would reduce poverty and inequality and improve the quality of life throughout the region.

—Adopted the Asean Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers that would shield overseas workers from abuse and exploitation by their employers or recruiters.

The formation of a rules-based organization would be a big step forward from the present traditional stance of Asean of non-interference in one another's domestic affairs which has often been cited by member countries in refusing to enforce Asean decisions. Some Asean leaders have warned that unless the bloc adopted stricter rules to enforce policies, it risked becoming irrelevant.

Most analysts doubt that Asean can create a free trade bloc similar to the European Union by 2015. The region is not so homogenous as that of the EU because it includes a varied spectrum of countries, ranging from highly developed Singapore with a per capita GDP of $28,600 to impoverished Laos with a per capita GDP of about $2,000. Asean still has to do a lot of ironing out of disparities between member states and harmonizing their regulations.

The Asean leaders said they were prepared to make contributions to ensure a positive outcome in the Doha Round that would allow their economies to develop and prosper. The successful conclusion of the round is indeed crucial to the strengthening of the multilateral trading system.

The Convention on Counterterrorism is designed to meet the grave danger posed by terrorism to innocent lives, infrastructure, the environment and regional and international peace in the region. Some analysts, however, said that its enforcement could be hampered by differing legal and judicial systems in the region.

The debt-for-equity plan endorsed by the summit would involve 102 of the world's poorest and most heavily indebted countries. Its ultimate goal is to reduce poverty throughout the world by half by 2015. The proposal is a creative solution to the twin problems of perennial poverty and crushing debt being endured by the world's poorest nations and deserves the serious consideration of the world's richest nations as well as organizations like the Paris Club of international lenders.

The Asean Declaration for the Protection and Promotion of Rights of Migrant Workers would focus the attention of both sending and receiving nations on the many problems of overseas workers. These workers are often the victims of gross exploitation and abuse by their employers and recruiters. The declaration should help put an end to this lamentable state of affairs.

The Asean Summit, originally scheduled in December, may have been postponed under questionable circumstances, but its output last week has been commendable. If the Asean could accomplish only half of what its accords and declarations seek to do, it would give impetus to national economies, promote regional security, uplift communities and improve the quality of life of 550 million people in this part of the world.

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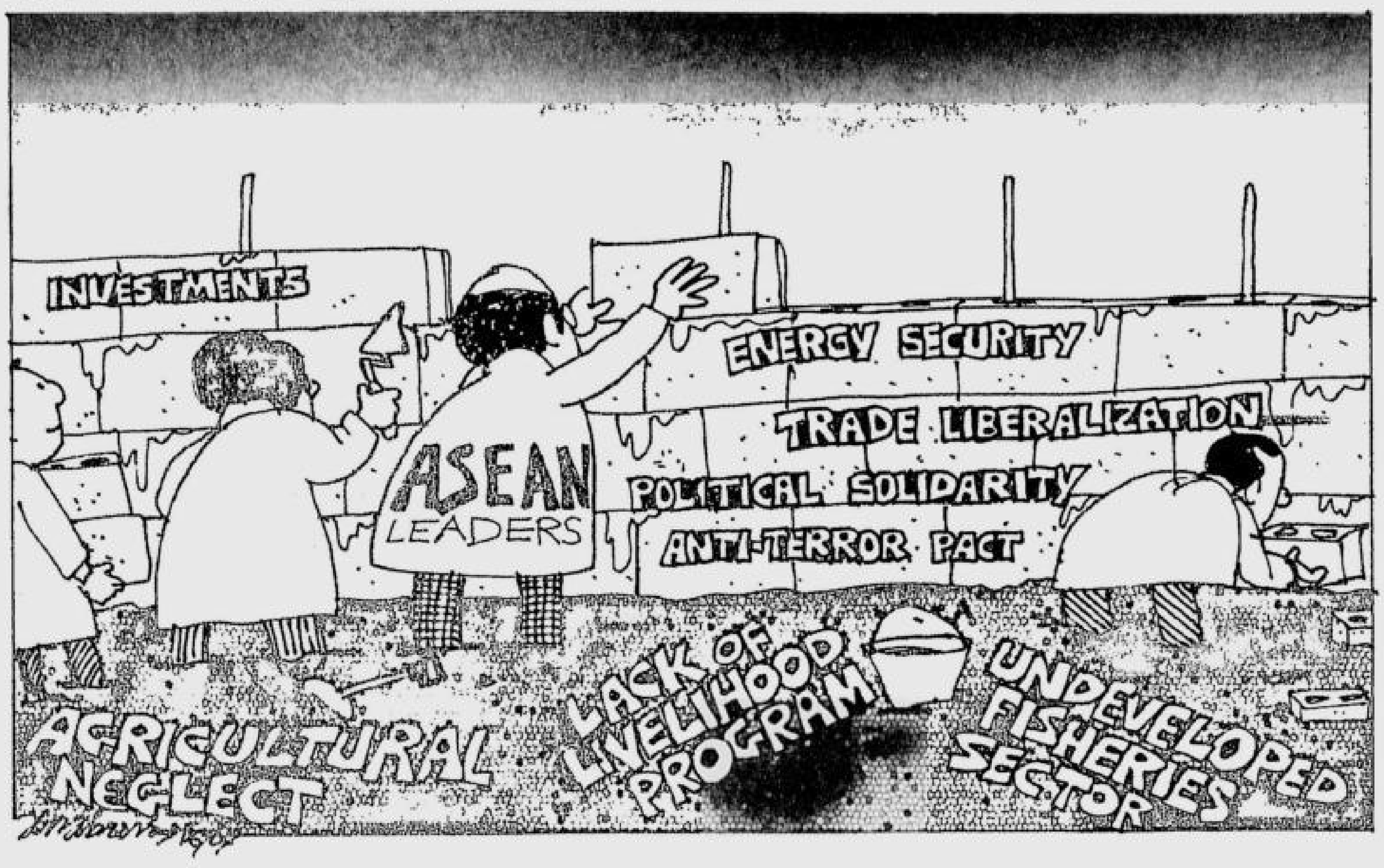

Waving goodbye as cop-out

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"TRAINING A DOCTOR COSTS IN EXCESS OF $152,000 (or P7.52 million at present exchange rates)… Huge numbers of teachers, including many of the best-trained, leave the country directly after qualifying. And for the state to get no return on this enormous investment is a real problem…." That describes the Filipino diaspora. Right?

Wrong. That's the "brain drain" sapping South Africa, as described by Education Minister Kader Assmal, on the British Broadcasting Corp.'s program, "World on the Move." And this drain is reflected in the rising numbers who cross borders, often illegally, desperate for a better future.

Globally, one in every 52 migrants comes from Asia and the Pacific. Today, 7.92 million Filipinos work abroad. Within Asean, the number of women migrants and the incidence of undocumented migration are on the upswing, notes the Asian Development Bank.

At the Cebu Summit, Asean heads of state approved five documents, one of them the "Asean Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers." The accord is not legally binding. But it is a useful step that commits the 10 Asean countries to provide better safeguards for a mobile, mushrooming—and increasingly feminine—workforce.

In Hong Kong alone, there are 142,000 Filipinos, 108,000 Indonesians and 30,000 Thais. Indonesians tend to be younger than most Asean migrants who usually are 25 to 30 years old, the ADB survey found. Eight out of 10 completed high school. "Filipinos are among the most highly educated."

Latin American migrants mostly head for the United States and sometimes Canada. In contrast, migrants from Asia and the Pacific cascade into over 160 countries and crisscross Asean countries. A third of the 165,000 Malaysians who work in Singapore commute across the now-flooded Johore causeway daily. Filipinos staff Doha duty-free shops, teach in Saipan, serve as parish priests in Lebanon, collect garbage in Riyadh and fly jets out of Detroit.

Disparities in law, policy and practice within Asean cause problems. Malaysian labor laws, for example, do not cover domestic workers. Many "Indonesian maids work 16-18 hours a day, 7 days a week, and earn less then US$5," Kuala Lumpur's Sun newspaper reports. In Singapore, pay for Filipino domestic helpers is about 30 percent more than for Indonesians. They get one or two days of rest a week, which Indonesians typically do not receive.

"Whether this disparity is market driven is highly debatable," the study adds. "Filipinos … have well-established network and support systems to get better labor terms and conditions." A non-legally binding document, the new Asean accord will take the first hesitant but welcome steps to close these gaps.

In 2004, migrant workers, the world over, sent home through formal channels an estimated $127 billion. What comes through couriers and other conduits is murky. Asians accounted for about $53 billion (or 42 percent) of the official stream—hefty enough to alter central bank balance sheets. Filipino overseas workers bought a quarter of the lots sold by big real estate firms in 2006, up from 15 percent last year. Aside from Mexico, the other top four recipients were India, Philippines, China and Pakistan.

The bulk of remittances come in modest packets for families in Indonesian *kampungs*, Thai *amphurs* or our *barangays*. On average, migrants send back $300 to their families. And the cash goes to the poorer third of the population. For thousands, it means food on the table, school for the kids, medicine, even cash for beer, cockfights and *jueteng*. Governments and banks are scrambling to improve channels for funneling funds, away from bottomless consumption into lasting investments.

The hunger that drives this riptide of people will not ebb soon. "The movement of people from poor and failing states to rich and stable ones is as inevitable as water running downhill," says the BBC's George Alagiah. "If water is a force of nature, then migration is a force of history."

Alagiah is from Sri Lanka who, after migrating via Ghana, became a leading broadcaster. Those who left Ireland after the Potato Famine enriched America, he says. If Australia relied solely on migrants from England, it'd be a backwater country today. And the Indian diaspora brought commercial energy and professional skills to Britain. "The challenge is not to try to stop migration but how to manage it."

But how? To stem the torrent of "illegals" from Africa, the European Union is tightening immigration rules. South Africa mutters about invoking the right to refuse systematic recruitment of its professionals. The US is building a wall along the Mexican border. And visa applicants must debunk the "presumption they seek to immigrate."

Other forces are at work. Modern information technology stokes aspirations. "How come immigrants looking for a better life in the West aren't interested in developing their countries of origin?" gripes a Finnish writer. "Every person has an obligation to their folk and nation and all these immigrants looking for an easier life are dodging their responsibility by harvesting from a table set by others."

Ultimately, a country that cannot hold on to its best and brightest compromises its future. And we Filipinos must ask ourselves: Is waving our migrants goodbye (and waiting for their checks in the next mail) a copout for our failure to get our act together at home?

***

(E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com)

Fighting terror

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

NONO ALFONSO, S.J. OF THE INSTITUTE ON Church and Social Issues made an interesting observation in his piece which appeared in our Opinion section last Saturday. No irony could be more sublime, he said, than that the Asean is making all sorts of noises about battling terrorism and yet can't see it being actively promoted, or indeed systematically carried out, right in its own backyard.

"It will be playing host to a country whose terrorism against its own citizens is widely known: Burma (Myanmar). While many countries in Asia are opening up toward greater freedom and democracy, Burma, ruled by a military junta, has remained a rogue state. It has arrogantly snubbed diplomatic initiatives from Asean and even from the United Nations that would have paved the way for the restoration of democracy and civil liberties."

It's a very good point and one that shows up the hypocrisy of the anti-terrorism campaign being waged by the usual suspects today. It's not unlike George W. Bush calling on all the world to help him fight terror wherever it rears its ugly head, ugly head being defined only by what he says it is and not by what he has. Quite incidentally, that madman is still insisting on committing more troops to Iraq notwithstanding that America's continued occupation of that country represents a crime against humanity, if not a downright terrorist act. While at this, where are those local idiots now who, riding on the crest of the Bush-made hysteria then about invading Iraq being the patriotic thing to do, predicted smugly that Iraq would never become another Vietnam?

But to go back: Alfonso makes a good point particularly in light of the anti-terror pact the Asean meet in Cebu has just produced. That agreement, which is being hailed as groundbreaking, expressly says that Asean commits itself to "counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations," and will offer no safe harbor to individuals who have committed or propose to commit terrorist acts.

Well, if so, why does "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations" include only communist groups in certain parts of the world—the Philippines, following the US lead considers the Communist Party of the Philippines a terrorist organization and is determined to root it out by the presumably non-terroristic way of murdering every suspected sympathizer—and not thuggish governments like Burma and those that mean to root out terrorist organizations by the presumably non-terroristic way of murdering all their sympathizers? Indeed, why does "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations" include only the bombing of public utilities by misguided citizens and not the repression of the citizens by power-mad autocrats?

The terror that governments feel at the threat of being attacked cannot be more than the terror that citizens feel at the actual reality of having their homes invaded at any time for no other reason than harboring a computer without government permission, which is the case in Burma. Fighting terror can only be justified by the passionate desire to defend life and freedom. But what if the self-appointed defenders of life and freedom are the very threats to the life and freedom of their citizens?

That question is particularly urgent given that, as a friend of mine studying abroad pointed out to me, none of the members of the Asean today is a functioning democracy. At least not in the liberal democratic sense of the word. At least not in the free elections, observance of human rights and civil liberties, libertarian, egalitarian and non-sectarian sense of the word. The current Asean meet in fact fills me only with déjà vu. I've seen this before, during Marcos' time, when the Asean, which largely harbored authoritarian regimes, also then loudly called for jihad against a common enemy: communism. That was all very well, except that in what name was it fighting communism for? For most of the citizens of the Asean countries, it was in the name of dictatorship.

It was so then, it is so now. The same thing Alfonso raised about Burma may in fact be said for the host country itself. There's nothing more ironic than that Asean is making noises about fighting terrorism when it can't see that pure and absolute terror is being systematically wreaked in the country that is currently basking in its "moment of glory" by hosting it.

Paraphrasing Alfonso, it is a country whose terrorism against its own citizens is widely known. While many Asian countries are opening up toward greater freedom and democracy, the Philippines, ruled by an unelected president with the support of a few key generals, has turned into a rogue state. It has largely ignored calls from the international human rights and media communities to stop the wholesale murder of political activists and journalists, apart from token responses such as the Melo Commission, which is about as potent as an expired lover, and to restore sanity, if not decency, to this once beautiful country.

Can anything be more terroristic than summarily shooting democracy in the head, which is what the theft of the vote means? Can anything be more terroristic than vowing fatwa against God's, or GMA's, enemies, such as by bashing the heads of angry crowds that gather to damn the usurpation? Can anything be more terroristic than unleashing murder and mayhem against the citizens in an effort to uphold wrongdoing? Anti-terrorism isn't fighting the things that terrify governments, it is fighting the things that terrify the citizens.

The only time I'll applaud the Asean for having an anti-terror pact that proposes to send terrorists to their home countries in chains is when they apply that to anyone named Garci, Or any variation thereof.

Successful Summit

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

CEBU—THE 12TH ASEAN SUMMIT WOUND UP last Sunday night and the East Asia Summit yesterday afternoon, and all the 16 heads of state were out of Mactan Airport by 4 p.m. yesterday. Cebu will settle down to a brief respite before the annual Sinulog festival over weekend. The media have reported on issues tackled here, such as the free trade agreement with China by 2015; the ratification of the Philippines' debt-for-equity proposal; Asean's approval of the Convention on Counter-Terrorism; the drafting of the Asean Charter by the "Eminent Persons" Group, among them former President Fidel V. Ramos, which will be presented at the next Asean Summit in Singapore later this year, and other issues. The media also noted the crucial dialogues with China, Japan and South Korea in Mactan Shangri-La, and President Macapagal-Arroyo's plea to Burma to free Aung San Suu Kyi.

* * *

Soon, however, all these will blur and what will remain in this island province will be the memory of its big "coming out party" when Cebu took center stage in the Asian region. Part of that memory was the big show of cooperation between local and national officials from Manila who flew to Cebu to take charge of the big event. The major role of Summit host was played by GMA herself, and she was ably assisted by the Department of Foreign Affairs, led by Secretary Alberto Romulo, as well as Ambassador Marcial Paynor, the Summit organizing committee's secretary-general (who lost 25 lb in the months of preparation), Undersecretary Linda Basilio, Ambassador Victoriano Lecaros and other officials. Credit for keeping the Summit safe goes to retired Gen. Leo Alvez and the police and military.

Stilled by its success were earlier criticisms of last month's postponement and fears that only few Asian leaders would show up, as all 10 Asean leaders and six dialogue partners came. What will dominate the collective memory is that Cebu passed its major test with flying colors, and now the entire nation and the Filipino people revel in its success.

* * *

As if the gods were pleased, Saturday's rains and dark clouds over Cebu mercifully gave way to glorious sunshine and breezy weather by Sunday. The seas around Mactan Shangri-La Hotel and the Hilton Hotel, where many delegations were staying, never seemed bluer, while flags fluttered in the wind at the new Cebu International Convention Center in Mandaue. Traffic was horrendous, especially along Mactan's narrow roads, as the police allowed VIP convoys to pass. But everyone cheerfully accepted all the inconveniences as part and parcel of going big.

* * *

The CICC, whose roofs leaked last December, was ready at the weekend. It was also the venue of the East Asia Summit yesterday. The CICC's architecture is soaring and airy-looking because of the glass paneling all around. Its facilities are state-of-the-art. The plenary hall where the 16 leaders convened was simple but elegant, and each Asean country was given an exhibit booth. I inspected the ladies rooms (always the weakest link in our public buildings) and found them up to international standards. Furniture designer Kenneth Cobonpue's chaise longues adorned the lobby.

Cebu Rep. Eddie Gullas proudly pointed out that the CICC was an all-Cebuano production, with Gov. Gwen Garcia, its builder, "providing the vision and inspiration"; architect Manny Guanzon, the design; engineer Willy Te, the contractor; and Apollo Enriquez, former dean of engineering at the University of Visayas in Cebu, consultant. Mandaue Mayor Tadeo Ouano provided the land.

* * *

Garcia, in a flaming red terno, welcomed the guests to the CICC for cocktails, as they got their bus assignments for the gala dinner at Mactan Shangri-La. She said she had shed many pounds due to the terrible pressures last December as well as all the criticisms and brickbats. How did she weather it all? She just prayed and prayed, Garcia said.

She related that originally she had planned to build a sports complex in Mandaue as a gift to its people who gave her a wide margin in the polls. But when GMA announced her intention to hold the Summit in Cebu, it had to give way to the CICC, which now places Cebu in a strong position to host major events.

* * *

Much of the memory will focus on the cultural presentation during the gala dinner that President Arroyo and First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo hosted last Sunday night under a huge, gleaming white tent specially built by Mactan Shangri-La reportedly at a cost of P30 million. I happened to sit next to Hiroshige Seko, a Japanese Foreign Ministry official who serves as special advisor to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. He said that of all the cultural shows at various summits he has attended, RP's was the best. But he said he's not surprised, for the Filipinos "have such a reputation for artistry." Credit for the one-and-a-half-hour show, which expertly blended traditional and contemporary Pinoy artistry with Asian inspirations, goes mainly to Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara, who put it together over many weeks. However, Lupita said she merely implemented GMA's ideas.

* * *

More on the show's highlights next time. Suffice it to say that last Sunday's show was timed, as the Asean heads of state had wanted it, to run through the entire dinner.

The dinner was another work of art, featuring long tables laid out in white tablecloth with white flowers from Cebu and Manila, and served by immaculately clad waiters. The Pinoy menu was simple but worthy of the Sultan of Brunei: Visayan seafood salad served on black mother-of-pearl bowls, cream of young coconut soup, grilled Palawan lobster tail and sea bass with lemon-butter sauce, and a sampling of three all-time favorite Pinoy delicacies. The dinner was meticulously supervised by the President's social secretary Bettina Araneta-Aboitiz, a Cebuana by affinity.

China's role in the Hoi Wan incident

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AS A WAY OF BRINGING TO A CLOSE THE COVERAGE of the arrest of Chinese fishermen caught poaching in Tubbataha, I'm running in full these "reflections" on the incident written by Lory Tan, head of World Wildlife Fund-Philippines. Tan has been waging a virtual one-man campaign to bring to the attention of the people, through the media, first, the incident, and second, the government's abject failure to defend Philippine sovereignty and environmental integrity in the face of the Chinese Embassy's vigorous defense of the poachers.

The crew members of Hoi Wan, the apprehended vessel, are now free after they were able to post bail.

Will the Hoi Wan incident lead to more resolve on the defense of Philippine waters and sovereignty? Or will it teach Chinese the wrong lessons, especially that foreigners can ride roughshod over our laws, without officials raising so much as a finger in protest? The entire incident, if I may so, is more than just "fishy."

* * *

IN AN E-MAIL discussion on the Chinese poaching issue, now being pursued by WWF offices throughout the world, it was discovered that the Chinese CITES Management Authority/CWCA are, apparently, unaware or misinformed about the facts of the cases involving illegal fishing activity by Chinese fishing boats.

To our consternation, they apparently believe that this is simply a boundary dispute between China and Philippines, and not a wildlife issue. They do not realize (or recognize) that the fish were all caught in Philippine waters.

They also simply dismissed fishery issues are mere business issues. The Chinese government no longer organizes such activities especially after China embarked on the road to economic reform. The official stand is that most of these boats belong to the private sector. The unwritten message here is to leave business issues up to the private sector to resolve. Government regulation is, apparently, no longer seen as productive.

In a rapidly shrinking planet, with overlapping needs and management challenges that require multi-lateral consensus, this is a rather irresponsible position. Throughout the world, corporations are recognizing the catalytic responsibility they have to steer our planet toward sustainable development and a more predictable future. This attitude manifested by the Chinese bureaucracy runs in the opposite direction. This position is out of step with global trends.

* * *

SINCE the Napoleon wrasse was listed on the CITES Appendix II, Chinese authorities have taken the stand that fishing fleets can catch such fish if they have a license. They do not even recognize that none of these fishing boats had the proper licenses to buy, catch, transport or possess endangered species. There seems to be a further indication that they tend to believe that business should be allowed to do business in whatever way they see fit.

The repercussions of these three findings are profound. They involve the recognition of what constitutes internal waters versus international seas. This has major negative impacts of natural resource management throughout the region. They involve the role of government in the regulation of business activity. They also involve the recognition of international agreements that stipulate what is acceptable behavior, and what is not, for nations that see themselves as responsible global citizens.

As a preliminary action, a report on this rapidly growing phenomenon will be submitted to the CITES Secretariat by Dr. Yvonne Sadovy, global expert on the Napoleon wrasse. The Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has been encouraged to submit a parallel report on the same incident. The goal is to table these findings and take them up with the Chinese government at the next CITES Conference of Parties.

* * *

LAW enforcement works when the concepts put into law by the legislature are faithfully implemented by agencies of the executive branch and applied without favor by members of the judiciary. In the cases involving Chinese poachers in Palawan, this is not happening. There is a clear and repeated failure of delivery, tantamount to a failure in governance.

The manifest partiality shown by some members of the judicial and executive branches in these cases result in a failure of enforcement and public service that translates to an inability of some branches of government to cohesively deliver on the expectations of taxpayers and voters.

As in the case of Guimaras and the Solar 1 oil spill, we are once again seeing different government offices and some public servants working at cross-purposes. The actions and intentions of those in government who have chosen to serve the people, and fight for the public interest, are rendered inutile by the few who use bureaucracy, political priorities, their own organizational mission and the rapid evolution of events as excuses to achieve results that do not serve the greater good.

* * *

THE DEPENDENCE of the greater majority of Filipinos on our environment as their main source of income and protein is jeopardized by scalawags who see government responsibility as personal privilege, and act (or keep silent) to seek personal aggrandizement, advancement or financial benefit. This is a sad state of affairs that must be addressed urgently.

This tragic failure of good governance is glaringly evident in the case of Hoi Wan. Clearly, our existing laws and legal procedures need to be reviewed and fine-tuned so that they deliver the results expected by taxpayers. There is a felt need to improve the flow of justice, and reduce the number of actions that are left vulnerable to arbitrary decision-making. The lack of transparency and definition has long been identified as a fertile substrate for corruption and injustice.

Latin America's next growth challenge

WORLD VIEW

Simon Teitel

SINCE 2003, LATIN AMERICA'S ECONOMIES have been thriving, with gross domestic product (GDP), including estimates for 2006, up by 17 percent—an average annual growth rate of 4.3 percent and a 12-percent increase in per capita GDP. While impressive, this is only the second time in 25 years that Latin America experienced four consecutive years of positive economic growth. Will such good times continue?

This recent growth has been fueled by a strong boom in commodity prices, including not only energy inputs such as oil, gas and coal, but also metals, minerals and agricultural products. Growing demand for raw materials, owing to sharply increased industrial growth in Asia, particularly China and India, has benefited the terms of trade of many Latin American countries, and this is not expected to end anytime soon.

Historically, fiscal profligacy tends to take hold at times like these, with windfall revenues wasted on extravagant public projects. But not this time—at least so far. In Latin America's seven principal economies—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela, which together account for almost 90 percent of regional GDP—annual economic growth averaged 6 percent in the third quarter of 2006, while industrial output was up by 8 percent. But their governments seem to be taking advantage of the bonanza to pay off pending external debt and increase their foreign reserves.

Remarkably, responsible macroeconomic policy has followed a wave of populist/socialist electoral victories in recent years. Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela elected socialist or populist/reformist presidential candidates in 2006, while Bolivia elected a populist indigenous president in 2005, Uruguay a socialist president the same year, and Argentina a leftist-centrist president in 2003.

An increased degree of international financial independence is among the consequences of the raw materials bonanza. Countries such as Brazil and Argentina paid off their loans to the International Monetary Fund ahead of time, while others are buying up their own debt in secondary markets. Increased liquidity in international capital markets also reduced the need to obtain multilateral financing, and with it the need to accept conditions like privatization of natural resources and deregulation of public utilities.

But, for the most part, fiscal and monetary policies have so far not followed leaders' rhetorical promises of deep structural reforms and redistribution to favor the indigenous and the poor. Even so, the danger of fiscal deficits and inflation persist in several countries. As a result, the new generation of leaders cannot introduce drastic structural reforms, badly needed in several countries, in a way that jeopardizes macroeconomic stability—without which none of their promises can be fulfilled.

In fact, whereas economic growth in Latin America is often perceived as being very unequal (which explains the shift to the Left), recent United Nations data puts the region in first place among all developing-country areas. Not only is the region's economic performance strong; so is its score on the Human Development Index (HDI), which includes social indicators such as education and health. Indeed, while Latin America's GDP per capita is lower than the world average, it surpasses all other developing regions, as well as the world average, in the main social indicators.

Only one Latin American country (Haiti) appears in the group of low HDI countries, while the rest are in the medium and high HDI groups. Of the 30 Latin American countries included in this year's report, only one-third have lower HDI rankings than GDP rankings, and only a few—those with the region's greatest need for significant improvements in social infrastructure, particularly provision of health and education—show large discrepancies.

But two risks to Latin America's economic recovery loom large. First, with the current raw materials bonanza driving up prices of exported goods, the region is increasingly vulnerable to the so-called "Dutch disease," whereby higher wages and prices spread throughout the economy, weakening competitiveness, particularly in industrial markets. With Asian manufacturing exporters penetrating markets worldwide, such a development would be highly damaging to Latin America's growth prospects.

Second, at a time when economic globalization is rendering national borders porous, political leaders may get carried away by their rhetoric of independence. All bonanzas end. If no adequate provisions are made to sustain global competitiveness, the economic, social and political consequences could be dire. *—Project Syndicate*

Simon Teitel is a research fellow at the International Center for Economic Research (ICER) in Torino, Italy, and a former senior economic and research advisor at the Inter-American Development Bank.

A call to compassion

> To work within the human being leads immediately beyond the person. This is so because at its depth, the psyche of the individual contains reflections of the larger universe.
>
> *—Carl Jung*
>
> There are places in one's heart that do not yet exist, and into them enters suffering so that they may have their existence.
>
> *—Leon Bloy, in "End of the Affair"*

YOUNG BLOOD

Danicar Mariano

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I WAS SENT TO THE ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE held in Cebu, Philippines last Dec. 10 to 12, to represent Ang Ladlad in the youth plenary. In the conference, words like "Non-Interference," "Accountability versus State Impunity," "Human Rights," "Disarmament and Reintegration," "Peace-Building," "Bio Mass Regeneration" were thrown around. Fancy words which boil down to the essential dilemma of how to further our humanity by learning to clean up after ourselves and love our neighbor as ourselves. As ourselves, meaning on a level we feel comfortable with and which respects our limits. As ourselves, highlighting our strong points and our unique capacity to give, tapping into our boundless generosity toward a greater recognition that the other is more important. As ourselves, where the more we become who we really are, the more we are transported outside of our selves, which explains why love is ecstatic, a going beyond oneself.

To love our neighbor as ourselves involves an alternative ethic of care instead of the usual rat race of getting ahead. It is not a selfish kind of love that looks at what favors it can get in return, what trade arrangements it can further, what resources of one it can exploit, but a love that is permissive—non-interfering, respecting other cultures, letting others run things the way they want for as long as they are hurting no one.

For as long as they are hurting no one—that was a big question in the conference. When is it right to interfere? Where does political meddling start and non-interference end?

And what is the ethic of "non-interference" in a country like Burma, for example, where thousands of children are made to choose between leaving their families and taking up arms, having to kill their fellow civilians without knowing why or languishing in the jungles with only plastic over their heads to protect them from the rain, not knowing where their next meal is coming from, or whether the next step they are going to take will detonate a land mine.

How do you watch your neighbor languish without doing a thing? What is the ethics of standing by as your sister gets raped?

Some people say that the existence of evil is proof of the non-existence of God. For how can s/he let such atrocities continue when s/he could have done something about it? Before our Maker, however, what if we were asked the same question?

Terrorism is only possible when we do not recognize ourselves in others, seeing that to wound them is to wound ourselves, blind to the great sea of collective consciousness that we are all in.

What we do in psychology, political science, and all the social sciences for that matter, Neil Postman said, should actually be called moral theology. Because that's what they are about: how to tell our stories so that they resonate and remind us of that which is "the same in all." The simplest things are often the most difficult, and we spend so much money and so much effort and so much time just to learn the most essential: how to live in compassion and respect. Respect means to recognize the other as Other, allowing him or her to unravel his or her full potential, and opening as many doors as possible. Compassion comes from the Latin words that mean "with suffering." Compassion is to know how to suffer for another, whether it be your best friend, the stranger on the street, the child soldiers in Burma, the sex workers in Cambodia or the jailed human rights defenders in East Timor or the lesbians and gays in Malaysia. Solidarity in compassion is learning how to suffer through our common pain, trying to make that pain as bearable as it can be made in another, knowing that we share the same fate. The same fate of being gagged by hegemonic powers whose interests we do not serve and thus threaten, living in a culture of violence where we know nothing else, prevented from loving and learning to the fullest, struggling for a self-determination and independence that is ever-elusive.

Given all the poverty we have to endure, we like to take the easy way out through "assmosis," the process of becoming an ass by kissing ass. We sign bilateral agreements with the United States just so they would give us more money and "services" at the expense of justice for our countrymen and women (as in the case of Nicole and the Visiting Forces Agreement). We approve of neoliberal economic policies that threaten the lives and sustenance of the less powerful among us.

All of us are guilty of identifying with the aggressor when we would rather ally with the winning side—capitalists, whites, men, straights—because it also confers more power on us, momentarily allowing us to delude ourselves despite our pathetic condition. For all our colonial mentality, we could even say we are masters of this strategy.

In reality, how we act toward people who are weaker than us, those who are marginalized and scorned, is the true measure of our humanity. The human face of the other both begs and commands. It is a vulnerability that beckons us, questioning: "If you aren't good, do you have a right to be?"

If we are always called to suffering, to bear our cross, it is only because we are always called to compassion—and to love. And everywhere, whether we are learning about it in the regional conference of the Asean civil society, or in the politics of our own hearts, it is all we really have to answer to.

They say that "as long as we can be wounded, we can be saved." If we're not asking how to make life better for others and how to increase love in the world, we are asking the wrong question. Any good conference should remind us of this. Otherwise big words like "Development," "Dignity," "Responsibility," "Peace," "Equality" and "Human Rights" are just fancy concepts.

In this season of being saved, let us remember that.

Danicar Mariano, 24, is a political party media officer of Ang Ladlad (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender).

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Workers could end up losers in legislated wage increase

WHILE, ON THE SURFACE, THE LEGISlated P125-wage increase appears good for our workers, it could trigger a backlash; and the expected gains from this legislation might just end up negated.

We sympathize with the plight of the workers. However, we believe that the P125-increase in the wages of workers could spell disaster, mainly for small- and medium-scale businesses (although big companies would likewise suffer due to higher costs). It could also jack up the prices of commodities inasmuch as manufacturers would need to recoup the additional overhead costs the wage increase would entail.

Also at the losing end would be the Filipino workers, as small companies would be forced to cut down on manpower, or worse, shut down completely. The wage increase's negative impact would be felt especially in impoverished provinces where a lot of people are engaged in small- and medium-scale industries. Furthermore, the Visayas and Mindanao would lose their advantage as ideal investment areas as investors would have to cope with higher capital needs. Now that we are bombarded with cheap goods from China, we would lose whatever competitive advantage we have.

Besides, workers would not really feel the benefits of this increase as prices and taxes would likewise increase. In the end, the workers that we are trying to help might just end up the losers in this wage increase.

—HARRY L. ALVAREZ, Davao City

A pathetic way to get public attention

SEN. RALPH RECTO'S CHRISTMAS greeting commercial looks like an early campaign initiative. As we all know, he will run as a reelectionist in the coming May 2007 elections.

Watch his commercial. He's with his famous family; not only that, toward the end of the commercial, his son utters the senator's tagline ("co-Recto!").

As a viewer, I'm so disgusted because it interrupts my viewing pleasure. I keep asking, must politicians do this.

I have nothing against Recto. Maybe, this is just a small issue. Maybe, this is just one of his strategies to keep himself in the limelight. But I think it's a pathetic way to get oneself "appreciated" by the public.

—MARK CANDIDO,
Blk. 35, Lot 1, Phase 2,
Tamarind St., Rainbow Village 5,
Novaliches, Quezon City

Transfer to US Embassy custody of convicted Marine has strained RP-US relations

OF COURSE, OUR PEOPLE WERE DISmayed at the move of the Philippine government surrendering the convicted rapist, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, to the US Embassy for custody. The only justification given by administration officials for the move was that it was dictated by certain provisions in the Visiting Forces Agreement.

However, the Philippine government recognizes that there is a controversy in the legal interpretation of the VFA provisions regarding the temporary custody of Smith. In fact, it has submitted the custody issue to the Court of Appeals for resolution. Therefore, before transferring Smith to the US Embassy, the better part of discretion should have been to wait for the corresponding resolution of the Court of Appeals.

Unfortunately, the Philippine and US governments totally disregarded the Court of Appeals. Smith was spirited out of the Makati City Jail in the middle of the night without a court order. That was a most abhorrent and detestable government action. Can the Filipino people then be blamed for getting hot under the collar over the incident?

The unfortunate event has now strained Philippine-American relations. Had the administration adhered to the rule of law and respected the independence of the judiciary, this could have been avoided.

—ARTURO M. TOPACIO JR., UE Law Hall of Fame awardee, Manila and Cavite City

RP, US mollycoddling of Smith undermines respect for law, order

AS AN AMERICAN LAW PROFESSOR visiting the Philippines, I am appalled at the seeming complicity between the government of the Philippines and my country to protect a convicted rapist from the logical penal consequences of his acts. The mere appearance of complicity does not serve the interest of justice and can only damage relations between the two countries. What many perceive correctly or incorrectly as mollycoddling a criminal will in the long term only undermine respect for law and order.

The message my country needs to deliver to its troops and to the Philippine people is that if an American enters the Philippines and commits an act of violence against a citizen of the Philippines, the visitor will be treated no differently than if he were a citizen of the Philippines. The Philippine government should insist that all accused criminals be treated equally, whether of American or Philippine nationality.

If the Visiting Forces Agreement actually authorizes post-conviction detention of rapists by the United States, the agreement sorely needs to be renegotiated.

—M. R. FRANKS, professor of law,
Southern University,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

DOF clarifies method used in target-setting

WE WELCOME CONRADO BANAL'S knowledgeable contributions to the ongoing discussion on fiscal issues. However, we would like to correct some inaccuracies in his Jan. 9 column, which may have inadvertently created a wrong impression among INQUIRER readers.

Banal characterized the target-setting efforts of the Department of Finance as "using crystal balls such as forecasts on growth and inflation, which are hardly accurate." While no one can predict nominal gross domestic product (GDP) with 100 percent accuracy, every country uses nominal GDP forecasts as the basis for tax collection projections. However, it is only after we know the actual nominal GDP and other macroeconomic factors used in formulating the fiscal program that we can explain the difference between the collection target and actual collections.

Banal also said that "[The] BIR is probably the only tax collection agency in the world that has a yearly collection target." All countries have budget and revenue target (also called goal or projection) figures, which are necessary to determine whether the budget can be financed.

Finally, Banal said that "The target assumed that the BIR would collect some P27 billion in VAT on locally refined oil." We would like to clarify that the P27-billion target is for both the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs. The BIR's share of this target is P5.5 billion, while the BOC's is P21.5 billion.

When the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) sets its macroeconomic assumptions at the beginning of the budget season, it tries to read the economy as best as it can. There is no perfect forecast, but the DBCC, as with every other economic forecaster, tries to be as realistic as possible.

As Banal correctly pointed out, the media is grilling the BIR. We at the DOF, on the other hand, believe that the BIR performed very well last year, with an additional P40 billion collected due to improved tax administration. The BOC also demonstrated significantly improved tax administration, which brought in P11 billion as of end-November.

Strong revenue collection performance is critical to a country's global competitiveness and its ability to effectively provide vital infrastructure and social services for its people. This is why the DOF and its attached agencies are determined to continue working hand in hand to achieve our revenue targets for 2007, a balanced budget by the end of 2008, and our shared dream of a more progressive, prosperous and developed Philippines.

—GIL S. BELTRAN,
undersecretary,
Department of Finance

Mailed checks stolen from nuns

RINO M. BASILIO IS NOT ALONE IN HIS experience of checks getting stolen in the post office. The Good Shepherd sisters have the same experience.

We were expecting two checks from our congregation in New York. When they didn't arrive, we wrote them that our poor rural women have been waiting for the payment of the handicraft we had sent several months ago. Our New York nuns wrote us and attached a photocopy of the two checks they had sent. Both had been encashed: one in East West Bank in Dagupan, Pangasinan; the other in the Bank of the Philippine Islands in Carmen Rosales, Pangasinan.

Last Nov. 24, we wrote a letter to Antonio Patungan, manager of East West Bank, demanding an explanation how the bank could have encashed the money amounting to over $2,000. Did the person pretend and present an ID of Sr. Teresita Arceo to whom the check was issued? We also spoke and wrote to Leonardo Angelo of BPI last Nov. 29 for an explanation—and return of the amount of over $3,000 to us. BPI referred our complaint to the Branch Investigation Committee headed by Telma Abundo. Both banks have not replied to our letters. Is there a syndicate of post office and bank officials?

I hate to imagine how many checks—local and foreign—have been stolen from our mail these past years. I join Basilio in demanding that Postmaster General Hector Villanueva rid the postal offices, especially those in Quezon City, of dishonest employees. If there are any readers among you who have the same experience, speak up for our right to efficient and honest services from the government.

—SR. PILAR VERZOSA, RGS,
Good Shepherd Sisters,
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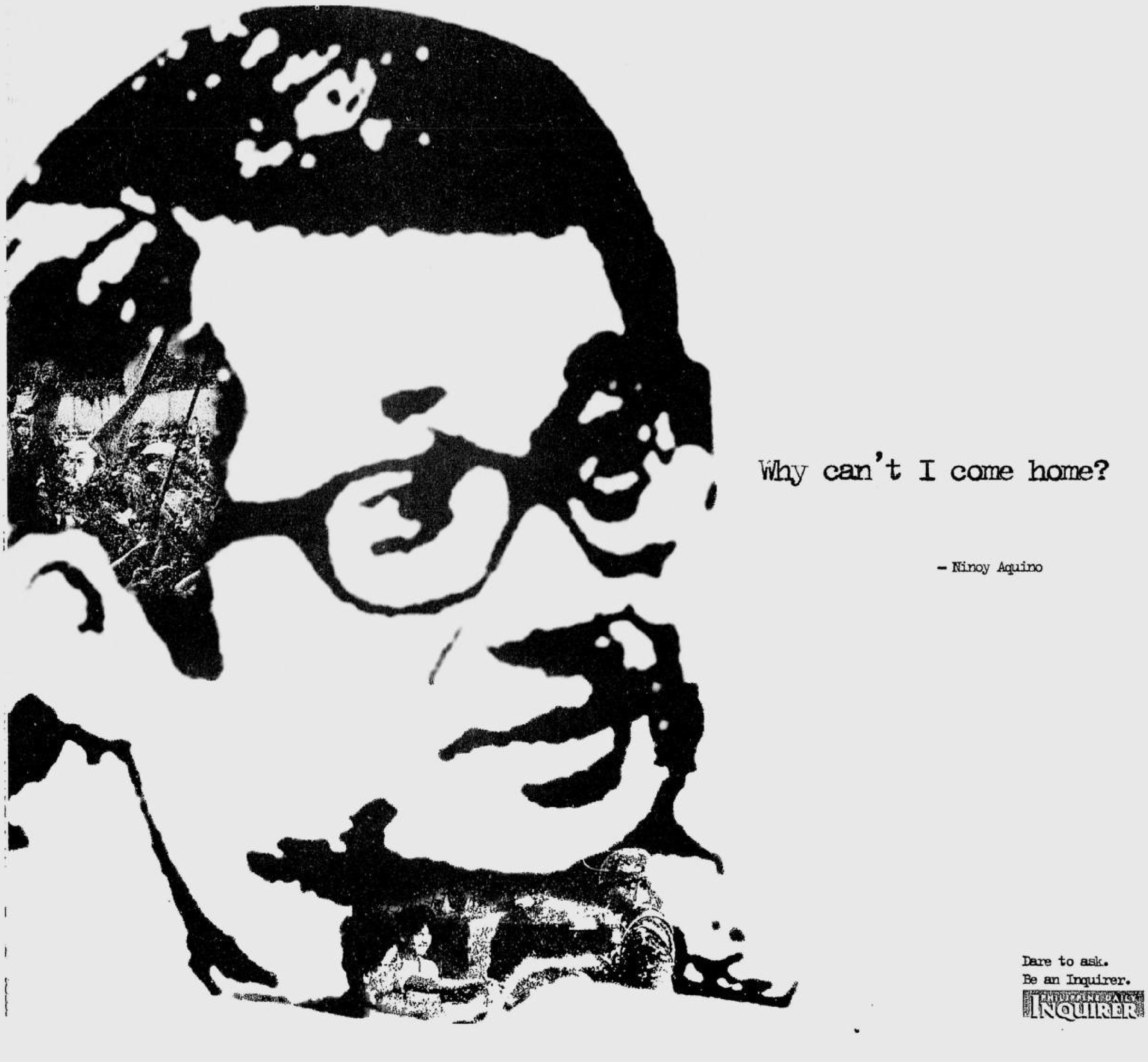

Why can't I come home?
- Ninoy Aquino
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Asean leaders open to sanctions on less sensitive issues

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

EVEN BEFORE A HIGH-LEVEL technical group has finalized a draft Asean charter, its leaders appear to be lukewarm to the proposal by the eminent persons group (EPG) to sanction recalcitrant members as part of the shift from a consensus-based to a rules-based organization.

In a pooled interview with Malacañang reporters, President Macapagal-Arroyo revealed that in the guidelines in drafting the charter given by the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, only "less sensitive issues" were likely to be sanctioned based on a majority voting of the members.

"While consensus is still going to be the norm for heavily political issues, there may be some less sensitive issues that can be addressed by majority vote ...with what kind of majority is still to be defined," said Ms Arroyo shortly after the closing of the 12th Asean Summit.

Based on the executive summary of the charter's blueprint, the EPG said that Asean's peace and stability would be promoted through "the active strengthening of democratic values, good governance, rejection of unconstitutional and undemocratic changes of government, the rule of law including international humanitarian law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."

The EPG, which cited Asean's main problem was ensuring compliance and implementation, suggested that the group "should have the power to take measures to redress cases of serious breach of Asean objectives, major principles and commitments to important agreements."

"Failure to comply with decisions of the dispute settlement mechanisms should be referred to the Asean Council. Such measures may include suspension of any of the rights and privileges of members. Unless otherwise decided by the Asean Council in exceptional circumstances, there shall be no recourse to expulsion of membership," said the EPG.

Although the EPG recommended that "decision making by consultation and consensus, should be retained for all sensitive important decisions," it allowed for the possibility of failure to reach a consensus in which case "decisions may be taken through voting, subject to rules of procedure, determined by the Asean Council."

The Asean members endorsed the EPG proposal and ordered a high-level task force to complete the drafting of the Asean charter in time for the 13th Asean Summit in Singapore before the yearend.

No explicit discussion

The President reported no "explicit" discussion on the EPG's proposal for expulsion of members due to human rights violations and unconstitutional changes in government.

"I don't think Thailand felt alluded to, given that Thailand has said they will return to democracy in a year's time. There's a timetable. There was talk about sanctions and expulsions and the natural thing that came to mind was Myanmar (Burma)," said the President.

Burma has been condemned by majority of the international community for keeping nearly 1,000 political prisoners, including opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Thailand Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was ousted by a military junta last September.

The details of the Asean charter, Ms Arroyo said, would not be settled at this point because "we are still in the area of broad principles rather than such details as the rules on expulsion."

Asked if how the proposal of the EPG would bear on the political events in the Philippines like "people power," the President replied: "As I said about unconstitutional changes in government, this was not discussed during our meeting with the EPG. No particular case was brought up."

Aside from getting more scrutiny from the international community on the rising number of political killings in the Philippines, the President's rise to power in 2001 through Edsa II continues to be questioned by his predecessor, jailed President Joseph Estrada.

Ombudsman ousts governor, 2 mayors

From page A1

officials from getting back into government service.

In its decisions all sent to the Department of the Interior and Local Government on Jan. 12, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez dismissed Iloilo Gov. Neil Tupas, Mayor Antonio Esquivel of Jaen, Nueva Ecija, and Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad of Pasay City.

Also dismissed were Trinidad's fellow suspended officials—Vice Mayor Antonio Calixto and eight city councilors.

"[They] are hereby meted [out] the penalty of dismissal from the service [and which] shall carry with it the cancellation of eligibility, forfeiture of retirement benefits and the perpetual disqualification for reemployment in government service," read the decisions against the dismissed officials.

The election period began on Jan. 14 and ends on June 13.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who received the dismissal orders on Friday, said the Ombudsman's decisions barred the elected officials from seeking reelection or any elective position in government.

While the Commission on Elections (Comelec) shall decide whether to allow the dismissed officials from seeking election, their disqualification from reemployment in government results from their being disqualified from running for election, according to Gutierrez's representatives.

"With the expected appeals from those who were ordered dismissed, it will be up to the Comelec if they will be allowed to file their respective candidacies," said Assistant Special Prosecutor Marina Demeterio at a separate news conference.

Executory

"But as it is, our decision so states that they are barred from reemployment in government," Demeterio said.

PULIS SPD
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RIOT policemen guard Pasay City Hall following the Ombudsman's order dismissing its mayor, vice mayor and councilors from office.
ERIK ARAZAS

Even with the appeals expected to be filed by the dismissed officials, who may want to run in the May elections, the Ombudsman's orders are deemed executory, Demeterio said.

"The Ombudsman's decisions are executory once issued unless a TRO is issued by the courts," she said.

The antigraft body has disciplinary authority over all elective and appointive officials except members of Congress, the judiciary and impeachable officials.

Tupas was found guilty of illegal disbursement of P20,000 in 2004.

Tupas, along with Iloilo Board Member Cecilia Capadosa, was also found guilty of malversation of public funds through falsification of public documents for the release of P65,000.

Esquivel was found guilty of abuse of authority and grave misconduct in connection with the illegal recall of appointments of three directors of the municipality's water district.

P232-M garbage contract

Trinidad, his vice mayor and councilors, who were placed on preventive suspension last year while their case was investigated, were found guilty of entering into a P232-million garbage collection contract without public bidding.

The Comelec said no elective local executive or legislator may be suspended for a case not related to graft.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said suspensions of local elective officials were disallowed for the duration of the 150-day election period.

"If the complaint against the election official is not about violating the Antigraft and Corrupt Practices Law, then the suspension must not be served," Abalos said.

"But if it's connected with graft and corruption, then we can't do anything about it."

The province of Iloilo was plunged into a political crisis yesterday with two officials claiming to be its governor after Tupas refused to relinquish his post to Vice Gov. Roberto Armada.

Tupas refused to abide by the order of Puno implementing the dismissal order of the Ombudsman.

"I will not step down. I will not abide by an illegal order," Tupas said at the Capitol after Armada was sworn into office by Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar at around 4:30 p.m. at the DILG regional office.

Andanar also swore into office Iloilo Board Member Emmanuel Gallar as the new vice governor.

The dismissal order was not officially served to Tupas as of 5:25 p.m. after a team of Tupas' lawyers led by his son and board member Neil Jr. refused to accept a copy of the DILG order and Ombudsman decision.

DILG representatives led by the regional director, Evelyn Trompeta, attempted to furnish Tupas a copy of the orders through a side entrance of the capitol but they were not allowed to enter the building.

Trinidad also refused to leave his post. *(See story on Page A19.)*

Sedition

Puno warned the dismissed officials that holing out in their government offices and, as a result, preventing the course of public service may result in sedition.

"Barricading the capitol or the municipal hall is (an act) that can sometimes lead to a case of sedition which is a criminal case," Puno said.

Sedition is defined in this context by the Revised Penal Code as the crime committed when persons rise publicly and tumultuously to attain by force or by other illegal methods to prevent the government or a public officer from freely exercising its or his functions.

Puno appealed to Tupas, Esquivel and Trinidad to take their appeal to the courts instead of engaging the government in a tug-of-war over government premises.

"This is a peace and order problem. If they impede public service, it may lead to another offense that will only add to their problems. They should pursue their case before the courts," he said.

The Department of Justice upheld the power of the Palace and the DILG to suspend local officials facing various graft charges at the onset of the election period. *With reports from Jerome Aning and Armand N. Nocum in Manila; and Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

Lozano does it again, this time at Comelec

From page A1

complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo. Yesterday, Lozano filed his certificate of candidacy (COC) for senator at the Commission on Elections office in Manila.

It would be recalled that the 66-year-old Marcos loyalist filed an impeachment complaint against Ms Macapagal-Arroyo in June 2005, in connection with the President's alleged wiretapped conversations with former Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

The opposition alleged that Lozano was a "Malacañang dog" turned loose to file an "insufficient" impeachment complaint intended to preempt a similar complaint that members of the minority bloc at the House of Representatives were then planning to file.

The Lozano complaint was eventually dismissed after the minority bloc failed to get the required number of votes to impeach the President and transmit the case to the Senate for trial.

First to file

In January 2006, Lozano filed another impeachment complaint and then another one in June 2006, despite a "Bantay Oliver" watch which concerned citizens mounted to prevent him and others from preempting what they said was a chance to give Ms Arroyo her day in court and answer the charges against her once and for all.

Lozano was the first to file his COC at 8:55 a.m. yesterday at the Comelec law department. He registered under the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL), the ruling party during the Marcos regime.

Broadcast and print journalist Melchor Chavez, 55, also from the KBL, filed his certificate at 9:10 a.m.

Chavez and Lozano both ran for senator in 2004 and lost.

Theodore Aquino, 58, a civil engineer, resident of Merville, Parañaque City, and distant relative of the late ex-Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., filed his certificate at around 3:30 p.m. He registered as an independent.

The three were among the early birds who filed their COCs for senator at the Comelec main office in Manila yesterday.

Unity ticket?

Lozano told reporters that he and Chavez filed their certificates early "to symbolize our sincerity to serve in action, not in words."

He claimed that the KBL had been in negotiations with the administration party, Lakas-CMD, for the possible fielding of a unity ticket. He added that he had written Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita on Jan. 10 asking that he be "adopted" in the administration's senatorial lineup for the May 14 polls.

The lawyer said he had a role in forestalling the impeachment complaint initiated by the political opposition in 2006 against Ms Arroyo. Had he not preempted the opposition, Lozano said, the President would have been ousted through "people power."

Aquino's nephew

Aquino said he was running as a candidate of the global Filipinos. "There are 9 million of us all over the world propping up the economy with remittances, but we are not adequately represented in government."

He is the incumbent president of the University of the Philippines Alumni Association in America and served in various Filipino-American organizations. He said his expertise was solid waste engineering, public works and infrastructure projects.

Aquino said his father Claudio and the late Senator Aquino were first cousins, making him the latter's nephew. He said he last saw the senator in San Francisco being interviewed by a local paper, a few weeks before the senator left for the Philippines in August 1983.

Dual citizenship

He admitted to being a dual citizen—he holds Filipino and US citizenship—but said this would not be a hindrance to his candidacy. He is a registered overseas absentee voter in San Francisco, California.

Aquino said Filipinos overseas were ready to help transform the country given the chance to participate in its governance. "We are very much concerned about the brain drain and the only way to reverse this is to make the Philippines the new land of opportunity. Given the mandate, I will devote my time to this."

Others who filed their COCs were independents Rummel Pinera, 35, a "small businessman" from San Pedro, Laguna, and Daniel Magtira, 46, of Marulas, Valenzuela City.

His wife Kris

Magtira, who indicated his occupation as an "automotive electronic Pinoy rock singer composer," brought a guitar and performed for Comelec employees and newsmen.

In his COC, he said his wife was a certain "Kris Aquino" and that he was officially nominated by Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos and show biz talk show host Boy Abunda.

The Comelec will receive COCs from candidates until Feb. 12.

Director Alioden Dalaig of the Comelec law department said his office would be open up to 8 p.m. every day, including Sundays, and up to midnight on Feb. 12.

Based on election rules, the Comelec has the right to declare a candidate a nuisance if the COC was filed to put the election process in mockery, or if it causes confusion, for example, if a registered name is similar to those of other candidates.

The candidate may also be declared a nuisance if it is determined that he has no real intention to run for office.

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4 C. Mindanao bomb suspects held

COTABATO CITY—ALL FOUR SUSPECTS BElieved to have been planning to execute more bombings in Central Mindanao but were arrested on Saturday denied there was such a plan but refused to be interviewed without their lawyers.

Supt. Paniares Adap, city police chief, said the suspects—Andy Kalid, Norodin Salik, Ismael Abo and Castro Dalama—all residents of Sultan Kudarat town in Shariff Kabunsuan would not talk to reporters without the advice of a legal counsel.

"We respect that right and they are entitled to it," said Adap.

The suspects were arrested after an informant tipped off the police about their presence in a coffee shop at the old public market here, Adap said.

Insp. Erwin Tabora, who led the arresting team, said the suspects did not resist arrest. He said seized from the suspects were bomb components consisting of blasting caps, wiring, timing fuse and a detonating cord.

The civilian informant said the four were overheard to be talking about carrying out a bombing mission in Central Mindanao prompting him to immediately seek police assistance, Tabora said.

Government forces have placed this city and the neighboring provinces of Central Mindanao under tight security watch following the arrest of the four suspects and the circulation of SMS messages warning about more bombings.

"We are aware of this circulating bomb scare that's why we've been on a 24-hour heightened alert," said Army Maj. Bebarlito Baribar, chief of Task Force Tugis, a special antiterror and crime-busting operating unit of the 6th Infantry Division in Central Mindanao.

Baribar said the bomb threat circulated through text messages identified the would-be perpetrators as "Hadji Akmad Abdul alias Kamlon and Commander Gordon Saipula" of Barangay Salimbao, Sultan Kudarat in Shariff Kabunsuan, both members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu denied the allegation.

He admitted that Saipula belongs to the organization but has yet to check on Abdul's membership with the MILF.

"Gordon and his men will not resort to this (bombing) activity," he said.

"What is his objective to sow fear and terror when the MILF has been adhering to the signed ceasefire agreement with the government?" Kabalu asked.

Chief Supt. German Doria said the four were arrested by police at around 4:45 p.m. at the Bagi Restaurant in front of the Central Arcade, Cotabato City.

Doria said investigators are looking for solid evidence to link the four suspects to the bombings in Cotabato City, Kidapawan, South Cotabato and General Santos City last Wednesday.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) said yesterday it has identified the perpetrator of the Jan. 5 explosion in front of the HF Refreshment on Makakua Street, Cotabato City.

Siyo Obal, of Sitio Compact, Malingao, Midsayap, Cotabato and a member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), was identified by two witnesses as having carried out the bombing.

The two witnesses, Ambas Ahmad Tokan and Ramil Utto, said the bomb was planted to kill a certain Max Malang Utto, who had already been receiving death threats from a group headed by Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) 1st Division commander Amilil Umbra. The witnesses did not reveal why Utto was receiving the death threats.

The witnesses also identified the other suspects in the bombing.

The other suspects are identified as BIAF officers Ustadz Hawid Tundok, 105th Brigade Commander; Sajid Pakiladatu, 1st Battalion Commander; Ahmad Akmad Batabol Usman alias Basit Usman, platoon leader; Sedik Sotto; Ustadz Hawon; Pitta Otto; Abdul Hak; Kule Magong, and several others. *Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao and Alcuin Papa in Manila*

3-yr Vizcaya poll case nears its conclusion

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—The election protest involving the gubernatorial race of this province has gone down the wire as the Commission on Elections is set to conduct a final hearing to resolve the almost three-year controversy.

This after the six Comelec commissioners, sitting *en banc*, on Thursday failed to overturn the ruling of its first division which annulled the victory of Gov. Luisa Cuaresma in the 2004 elections.

In a 104-page resolution, the poll body, voting 3-2 with one abstention, sought to grant Cuaresma's motion for reconsideration of a Jan. 31, 2006 resolution by the Comelec first division declaring Leonardo Byron Perez III as the duly elected governor.

But the law requires that a majority vote of four of the six commissioners was needed to reverse the decision of a division that is the subject of a motion for reconsideration, said James Arthur Jimenez, Comelec education and information director.

"Since no majority vote was reached, this necessitates a rehearing under our rules," said Jimenez.

In its Jan. 11 ruling, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and Commissioners Rene Sarmiento and Florentino Tuason Jr. voted to reverse the division's resolution.

Commissioners Romeo Brawner and Resurreccion Borra, members of the first division, stood by their original ruling while Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer abstained.

Stray votes

Jimenez said the Comelec, after the rehearing, would immediately issue a final order based on the outcome of the voting to settle the controversy.

The Comelec made the clarification amid contradictory claims from rival camps over the effect of the Jan. 11 resolution.

Romulo Macalintal, Cuaresma's lawyer, earlier said the Comelec *en banc* has granted the governor's motion for reconsideration and affirmed her victory in the 2004 elections.

Macalintal's statement was issued on the heels of reports that Perez was set to assume his post as governor, due to the failure of the Comelec *en banc* to overturn the ruling of the first division.

In its Jan. 31, 2006 resolution, the Comelec first division gave credence to Perez's claim that votes cast in his favor in at least 308 precincts in four towns were either "misread or misappreciated" by the chairs of the boards of election inspectors, and were counted as votes for Cuaresma.

On the other hand, valid votes cast for Perez were considered stray, the resolution said.

In the original tally of the Comelec, Cuaresma obtained 56,008 votes while Perez received 53,227 votes.

But the Comelec's first division resolution said Perez, after a recount, won with 53,715 votes over Cuaresma's 53,037 votes or a margin of 678 votes. *Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

RP's 1st biomass power plant to rise in Quezon

UNISAN, QUEZON—THE FIRST biomass power plant in the country will soon be constructed in the Bondoc Peninsula area in Quezon province.

Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez said the proposed power plant, which will cost P1.3 billion, will use coconut husks, palm and dry leaves for fuel.

The plant is expected to generate 10 megawatts of electricity, which will be distributed for the additional power needs of some towns.

"With our wide coconut farms, the biomass power plant is assured of ready and abundant supply of raw materials," Suarez said.

Foreign funding

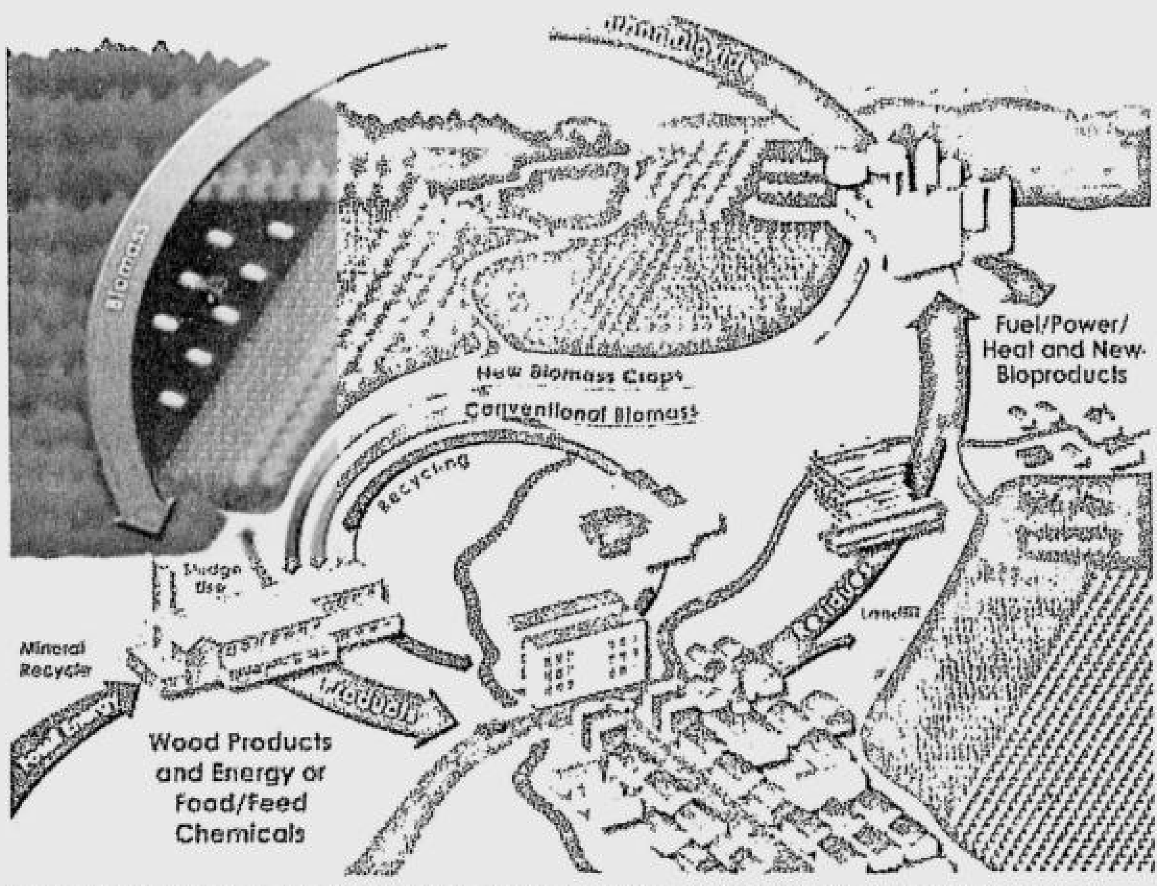
The lawmaker said the project, which will be put up in Catanauan and Mulanay towns, has already been assured of foreign funding.

Of the total project cost, 75 percent will be shouldered by the national government while 25 percent will be paid for by the provincial government.

Biomass is solar energy stored in organic matter like trees, agricultural crops and other living plant materials.

It is considered a renewable energy source because the growth of new plants and trees replenishes the supply.

Biomass sources provide about three percent of all energy consumed in the United States.



THE SEARCH for alternative fuel has led to the development of technology that could extract energy from plants. This technology is now being put to use in other countries, mostly the developed ones, and is making its presence felt in the Philippines following the enactment into law of the Biofuels Act.

SOURCE OF ILLUSTRATION—OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

Suarez said coconut farmers will earn additional income by supplying the plant with raw materials.

He said the plant will buy dried coconut palm for 80 centavos per kg and P1.15 per kg for the coconut husks.

He explained that once the project is completed, the Quezon Electric Cooperative, which supplies electricity to Bondoc Peninsula, will no longer need to purchase electricity from the two independent power producers in Quezon—Mirant Pagbilao Corp. in Pagbilao and Quezon Power Limited in Mauban.

"It will also help in maintaining our environment clean because it is free from pollution and fly ash containing sulfuric acid, which is emitted by some power plants from as high as 221,000 tons annually," Suarez added.

He also boasted that the power plant will contribute extensively to coconut production because instead of cutting coconut trees, the farmers will be enticed to plant more, which in turn will be a big factor in the protection of watershed areas.

Biofuels Act

Last week, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed into law Republic Act 9637 or the Biofuels Act, which requires vehicle manufacturers and owners, as well as oil companies, to use fuels diluted with sugar or starch-derived alcohol to reduce the country's dependence on imported fuel.

Using renewable raw materials to produce fuel is aimed at reducing the world's dependence on diminishing sources of fossil fuels, such as crude oil and coal. *Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

4 Bicol provinces have new police chiefs

SORSOGON CITY—FOUR PROVINCES in the Bicol region have new police directors who replaced their predecessors as part of the officers' routine tour of duty, according to newly installed Bicol police director Chief Supt. Ricardo Padilla.

The turnover of commands took place before the election ban on relief and transfer of government personnel took effect Jan. 14, Padilla added.

He said those replaced were the provincial directors of Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Masbate and Albay, while the directors of Sorsogon and Catanduanes were retained.

Padilla said the relief order came from Camp Crame.

In Camarines Norte, Senior Supt. Efren Yebra was replaced by Senior Supt. Henry Rañola. In Albay, Senior Supt. Herold Ubalde took over the post left vacant by Senior Supt. Roque Ramirez, and in Masbate, Senior Supt. Victor Hermida assumed command vice Senior Supt. Eugenio Alcovindas.

In Camarines Sur, an order for the relief of Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo had already been issued but Padilla said it was not implemented since the designated replacement, Senior Supt. Romeo Tambungi, was still on leave.

The official said the relief would now have to be approved by the Commission on Elections since the ban on relief and transfer of government personnel had started.

Padilla said the newly designated provincial directors were all in acting capacity pending the submission of a list of recommendees to the governors of the concerned provinces for them to choose their provincial directors. *Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

THRIFT YEAR

EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Celia Lanao, 34, sells piggy banks made of plaster of paris and cement for P25 to P100 each at the Baguio City Public Market. She earns as much as P1,600 a day selling the piggy banks, owing to the popularity of the pig this year. 2007, according to the Chinese, is the Year of the Pig.

Planning for other uses of Marcos bust starts

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

TUBA, BENGUET—MEMBERS OF an Ibaloi clan gathered in an abandoned government park in Barangay Taloy Sur here on Sunday to discuss the fate of the damaged Marcos bust, which still looms large over this sloping hillside.

Twelve families of the Kinomis clan, including a 102-year-old man, held a quiet thanksgiving ritual feast at a 30-year-old structure that was supposed to serve as clubhouse of the 355-hectare Marcos Park, including a golf course.

Pedro Narciso, 102, and his wife Nina, 86, said they were silent witnesses to the alleged atrocities committed against their clan during martial law.

"We are glad we have survived long enough to see our land returned to us," Narciso said.

The Court of Appeals affirmed last month a 2001 Regional Trial Court decision that nullified the government's purchase of the Kinomis clan's land during martial law.

Quoting the late Judge Nelsonida Ulat-Marrero of the Benguet RTC, the CA cited clear evidence that the Philippine Tourism Authority and the military coerced Ibaloi farmers into selling their six-hectare farm at the behest of allies of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

The decision grants Kinomis heir Rose Labotan, a retired teacher, full custody of the clubhouse, which was vandalized at the end of the 1986 "people power" revolution, said Honorato Aquino, one of the family's lawyers.

Aquino, who is a former congressman of Baguio, was the undersecretary of the Department of Tourism who investigated the sale after the Edsa Revolt. He eventually represented the Kinomis clan in court.

The CA decision also sets a precedent.

Joy Angelica Santos-Doctor, another lawyer of the family, said the decision should discourage the PTA from suing other Ibaloi people who have reclaimed the rest of the Marcos golf course.

"Tourism officials only sued seven Kinomis family heirs, maybe to test the legality of the sale first, but the other Ibaloi were fearful that the cases would affect all of them," Doctor said.

It also discourages the PTA from repossessing three old hotels in the park, which the Ibaloi people have converted into a community high school.

Labotan said the people who came to the ritual feast were not there to proclaim victory.

"[The] Ibaloi are a very quiet people. We did not come here with gongs because all we need to do is to each thank the ancestors individually [for the court's wisdom]," she said.

"But we are all here because we also have great plans for the park, now that the courts finally recognized our rights after 30 years. [However,] we still do not know what to do with that bust," she added.

The concrete bust was the first of a series of giant sculptures that the PTA wanted to build, using Mount Rushmore in the United States as a model, according to former Baguio Mayor Bernardo Vergara, who was PTA general manager at the time.

Most of the bust's features were damaged by a bomb blast on Dec. 29, 2002.

Some residents took the metal frames and foundations that shaped the bust's familiar features—the pompadour and the *barong tagalog* neckline of the Marcos image.

"I ordered the clan to stop salvaging the bust. I didn't really want it destroyed. We can use it for something else," Labotan said.

She said the community's initiative to convert the park's hotels into schools proved that they can use the same solution to develop the bust and the clubhouse.

The bust's foundations are sturdy, she said, so the villagers could reshape them to support a concrete building that will house a museum about the Ibaloi people's struggle during martial law.

Filmmaker Josephine Banasan and musician Raffy Kapunan said carpenters could decorate the museum by restoring portions of the Marcos bust, in order to sustain the history of the place.

The three-story clubhouse is also drawing interest from educators.

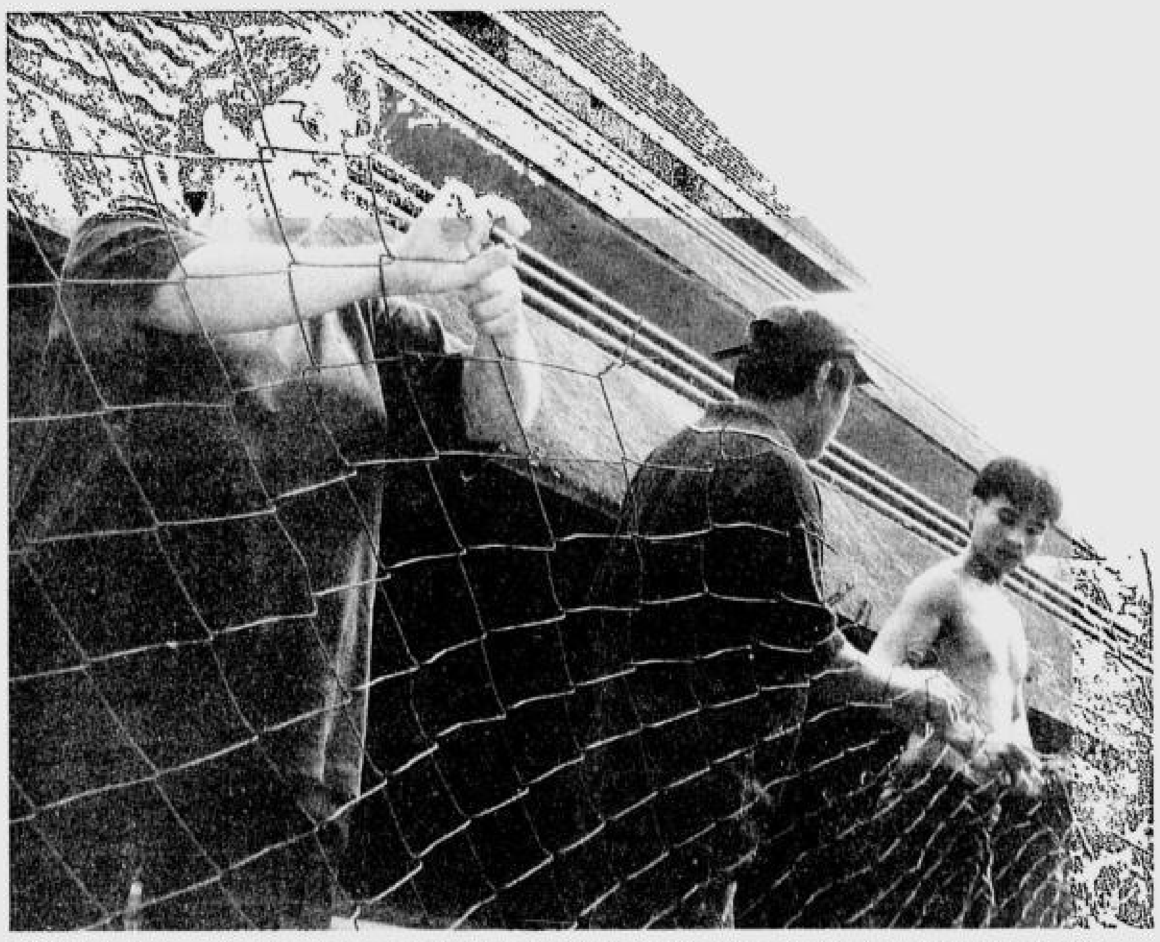
Eduardo Marrero, Judge Marrero's husband, consulted Labotan about converting the property into an alternative campus for education and skills training.

Activists have offered to lease the clubhouse so they can build an orphanage.

"If we develop these commercially, it will be something that will help my community. We did not fight this long for money," she said.

Labotan was sued by the PTA and by La Union officials who claimed that the Kinomis family had invaded government property. Pugo town in La Union shares borders with Tuba.

The La Union suit, however, was also dismissed by the courts.



ROSE Labotan, a school teacher and heir of the Ibaloi Kinomis family, helped her nephews raise metal walls around the Marcos Park Clubhouse on Sunday. Labotan is benefiting from a Court of Appeals decision which said martial law officials coerced her family into selling their lands to the government so it can build a golf course.
EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Bong Pineda not factor in polls, says Pampanga gov

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Pampanga Gov. Mark Lapid is confident that his impending faceoff with Board Member Lilia Pineda in the gubernatorial elections in May would be fought fairly, the governor's campaign manager said.

"He's looking at Lilia Pineda as a board member. He is not considering her relationship with her husband (suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda). He's looking at it at a political point of view. He feels confident that he will face a fair fight with her," Fidel Arcenas said.

Arcenas said Lapid had been silent amid allegations of corruption, lack of programs for the poor, and weak leadership hurled by Pineda and her allies.

The governor, he said, wanted to avoid accusations of premature campaigning.

"He's just trying to avoid the possibility of being accused of having waged an early campaign, of electioneering," he said.

Arcenas also said Lapid was "tired" of allegations that he was involved in the quarry scam, one of the major issues raised against him.

"We're waiting for Congress to call for a continuation of the hearings just so this thing can be closed," he said.

The House committee on environment began the hearings in February 2005 and the committee on good government in May that year.

The governor's father, Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, has not been called although the hearings focused on quarry taxes collected during the elder Lapid's stint as governor.

Arcenas said Governor Lapid would break his silence on various issues "as soon as he files his candidacy" in March.

Bong Pineda, in an earlier interview, had warned the Lapids not to raise the "jueteng" issue against his wife.

But Governor Lapid appeared to have scored a point over the Pinedas when he managed to put in his choice at the helm of the provincial police, INQUIRER sources in the police said.

The appointment of Senior Supt. Keith Singian as Pampanga police chief assures the governor of adequate protection during the election season and gives him a final say on who to choose as police chiefs in the 20 towns where his votes and those of his Lakas-CMD partymates needed to be secured, two officials said.

Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, Central Luzon police director, said Singian was keeping the post on an officer in charge status.

A third police source said Lapid was "pressured" into accepting Singian as the latter's supporter lobbied up to Director General Oscar Calderon, Philippine National Police chief. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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OBSERVER
A child's attention is diverted from a row of antiriot policemen sent to secure the Cebu International Convention Center for the Asean summit to a group of photographers that was covering the event.

Tight race for gov seen in Pangasinan

DAGUPAN CITY—TWO CONGRESSMEN, a vice governor, a former police director general, and the doctor-wife of the incumbent governor may slug it out in a free-for-all gubernatorial race in Pangasinan this May.

Pangasinan's second district Rep. Amado Espino Jr. said he had been aiming for the gubernatorial seat, which will be vacated by Gov. Victor Agbayani, who is now on his last term.

"It's still an option and I've been preparing for it," said Espino, who is now on his second term.

Sixth district Rep. Conrado Estrella III, despite reports he had decided to seek reelection for his last term in his district, has not "completely dropped out of the race yet."

"He is still considering running for governor," an Estrella supporter, who requested anonymity, said.

Vice Gov. Oscar Lambino, for his part, said any vice governor "would like to become governor someday."

"So, since it's already my last term, and the governor is also in his last term, my direction is toward the governorship," Lambino, provincial chair of the administration Lakas Party, said.

Former Philippine National Police Director General (now National Irrigation Administration chief) Arturo Lomibao said his gubernatorial bid is still on.

"*Tuloy ang laban* (The fight is still on)," Lomibao said in a text message.

On the candidacy of Agbayani's wife, Jamie Eloise, a doctor, the provincial information office in Lingayen cited on Wednesday a "growing clamor for the governor to field his wife."

All of the possible candidates are aligned with the administration. *Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Prospects bright for coconut industry

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—PROSPECTS are bright this year for the coconut industry in Eastern Visayas, according to the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA).

Joel Pilapil, PCA assistant regional manager, said the coconut industry in the region would continue to grow as more coconut-based plants were being established and the price of copra would likely rise as demand in the domestic and international markets had been increasing.

The prevailing price of copra in the region now is P22-P23.60 per kg, from P2.50 per kg several months ago.

Last year, however, the average price of copra or dried coconut meat was P16.71 per kg, which was lower than the P17.39 per kg in 2005.

Aside from the good prices of copra, he said that local coconut farmers now had a ready market in several coconut-based plants operating in Eastern Visayas.

Eight plants in the region use coconuts as raw materials, such as coconut husks for coir, coconut shells for fuel, and granulated carbon, coconut meat for oil.

"Each plant requires 10 metric tons a day," Pilapil said, referring to the coconut shells that the plants buy from the farmers.

These facilities use coconut charcoal to run their boilers instead of costly bunker fuel, he said.

Among them are New Leyte Edible Oil in Tanauan, Leyte; Samar Coco in Calbayog City; and Visayan Oil and SC Global in Baybay, Leyte.

Firm linked to STL use for 'jueteng' sues cops

BAGUIO CITY—POLICE HAVE filed a case against the operator of small town lottery in Ilocos Norte, accusing the firm of using the government-run project to operate the illegal numbers game "jueteng."

But the STL firm also filed charges against the police for allegedly harassing its employees, illegally searching its offices and seizing its equipment.

Ernelie Dancel, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) representative of Lucky Pick Amusement and Development Inc. (LPAD), said CIDG agents raided STL operations of the company on three occasions since it conducted a test-run in November last year.

Dancel said the company even presented to the raiding team documents that it had been given the franchise by the PCSO.

Senior Supt. Marvin Bolabola, CIDG chief for the Ilocos region, insisted, however, that the STL operation was actually jueteng, which is illegal.

"We are positive about that and we have filed our cases," Bolabola said.

Dancel said the CIDG first raided the LPAD operation center in Pasuquin and Dingras towns on Dec. 6 and in Paoay town on Jan. 6.

She accused the lawmen of misdeclaring the money they seized from the raids.

"In the Paoay police blotter, for example, they got P17,808 but they declared only P2,200," Dancel said.

The LPAD was granted to conduct a test run for the STL in Ilocos Norte by the PCSO for a year starting November last year. Under the agreement, the LPAD shall remit 5 percent of the net sales to the provincial government and 10 percent to the chartered cities or towns from the net sales.

But on Dec. 6, CIDG agents in Laoag raided the LPAD center in Pasuquin, took P35,000 and communications devices, and arrested eight employees.

On the same day, CIDG agents raided the LPAD center in Dingras and arrested two men.

Provincial Prosecutor Melecio Felipe dismissed the cases filed by the CIDG against those arrested after they were identified as LPAD employees. The CIDG did not reply on the motion to dismiss.

On Jan. 10, CIDG agents again raided the LPAD remittance center in Paoay and confiscated P17,000 and office equipment.

Dancel said some of their men in other towns had refused to operate after the Paoay raid. She said the LPAD had planned to move out of the province. *Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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13th Minor Draw Winners (December 15, 2006)
- **Diana Chua** - Moldex Blue User
- **Dunlop Commercial** - Partner
- **Annaliza Sapitula** - Secondary Partner

14th Minor Draw Winners (December 28, 2006)
- **Elena de Belen** - Sanimold Extra User
- **New Team Merchandising Hardware** - Partner
- **Jim P. Pula** - Secondary Partner

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Row shakes up Everest team; leader resigns

By Fe Zamora

THE FIRST PHILIPPINE MT. Everest Expedition (FPMEE), a team that made history by putting the first Filipinos on top of Mt. Everest, has hit ground as disagreements pull it apart.

Last year's expedition leader, Art Valdez, resigned.

Valdez said he quit the team because some of his teammates didn't like the idea of having only the three women climbers get to the summit of Mt. Everest.

He said all he wanted was for the three women to duplicate the feat of Leo Oracion, Pastor Emata and Romi Garduce in May last year.

Personal goals

"But everybody wants to climb. It has become a personal goal. How can you speak of unity when there is disagreement?" Valdez, who resigned last month, told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday.

According to Valdez, eight other climbers want to join the three women in the planned "unity climb" in April.

But Butch Sebastian, president of FPMEE and one of its organizers, said he saw no problem with all of the team members wanting to reach the summit of Mt. Everest.

3 years of their lives

"These people have put in three years of their lives into this effort. They've put their lives on hold. Some of these people have stopped working. Of course they want to climb," said Sebastian.

"When we put up the team we made them commit three years of their lives," he said. "Then you're going to tell them they can't climb?"

Valdez was replaced by Reggie Pablo, who said the FPMEE respected its leader's decision.

"He resigned for personal reasons, but he will continue to guide us. He is like a father to us," Pablo also told the INQUIRER.

As the new expedition leader, Pablo said the all-women team, and some men, would climb Mt. Everest in April, with one team climbing from the South side and another climbing the more perilous North side.

Sebastian confirmed the "differences" within the expedition. "There were different ideas on how to move forward, which is expected in any organization," he said.

According to Sebastian, Valdez's resignation was accepted by the group on Dec. 22.

Money matters

But sources in the team, who declined to be identified to prevent the feud from further blowing up, said Valdez resigned after he was questioned by some team members on where money that was generated for the unity climb went.

The sources said Valdez apparently resented being asked to account for the money and decided to quit.

No one among the team members wanted to go on record to discuss the money issue.

On May 17, 2006, FPMEE climber Heracleo Oracion became the first Filipino to reach the summit of Mt. Everest. On May 18, Erwin "Pastor" Emata and Romi Garduce also reached the summit one after the other.

April climb

The next expedition to the world's tallest mountain in April would have seen women climbers Karina Dayondon, Noelle Wenceslao and Janet Belarmino competing with all-women teams from Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia in a race to the summit. The expedition would need P15 million for the climb.

"My main concern is for the three women to make a historic climb on Mt Everest," Valdez said.

Valdez said maintaining a big group was not only costly but impractical. "*Hindi na news, kundi gastos* (It's not going to be newsworthy, but costly)," he said.

Oracion, the first Filipino to reach the peak of Mt. Everest, said he agreed with Valdez. "Mt. Everest is always there. It will not go away," he said.

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4 injured in oil tanker explosion

Blast triggers fire on board vessel docked off Binondo

By Leila B. Salaverria and Margaux C. Ortiz

AN EXPLOSION RIPPED THROUGH an empty oil tanker docked off Binondo, Manila yesterday morning, leaving four people injured.

The Philippine Coast Guard said four personnel from a company providing cleaning services were working on the MT Hagonoy when the incident occurred.

Three of them were injured: Delio Ranalan, 26; John Mar Cornico, 29 and Renato Quebec, 27, all residents of Vitas, Tondo.

A passerby, Belinda de la Cruz, 36, was also hurt when she was hit by flying debris in the forehead.

All four were rushed to the Mary Johnston Hospital for treatment.

The blast started a fire that was put out by the tanker's captain, Feliciano Galimba Jr., and eight crew members.

SFO2 Wilson Tana of the Manila Fire Department said the fire began at 8:56 a.m. following the explosion on board the MT Hagonoy which was docked on the Pasig River, in front of San Miguel Street in Parola, Binondo. The vessel is owned by Herma Shipping Corp.

"The tanker was already empty but there were still oil fumes which may have reacted to the cleaning equipment," Tana said.

The fire was put out at 9:28 a.m., the arson investigator added.

The Coast Guard's National Capital Region-Central Luzon office said it would convene its Special Board of Marine Inquiry to determine the cause of the explosion.

The PCG said the ship's crew refused to give details about the incident during the follow-up investigation.

The blast was strong enough to blow the metal lid off one of the tanks of MT Hagonoy which landed on an adjacent empty barge.

Other equipment on the tanker also flew off, including its oil spill boom which landed on top of the San Miguel building, about 100 meters away from the vessel.

3 car theft suspects dead in QC shootout

By Miko L. Morelos

THREE SUSPECTED CAR THIEVES were killed in a shootout with policemen in Quezon City early yesterday morning.

Police said the three men, who have yet to be identified, flagged down a taxi driven by Roldan Añinon, 26, in front of National Bookstore on Quezon Avenue at around 2:30 a.m.

Upon reaching the Kamuning flyover near the GMA 7 building, the police said the suspects declared a holdup.

The armed men then dropped off Añinon, taking with them the driver's cab.

Añinon reported the incident to policemen who alerted operatives on patrol, including the anti-car theft unit led by Insp. Angelo Nicolas.

Responding policemen followed the suspects' trail and saw the cab near the corner of Mother Ignacia Street and Timog Avenue.

They chased the vehicle but the suspects fired at them.

SPO4 Regino Sta. Ana of the anti-car theft unit said they were forced to return fire, hitting the suspects inside the taxi.

One of the suspects was killed on the spot.

His two companions were rushed to the East Avenue Medical Center where they were declared dead on arrival, police said.

Police recovered a cal. 22 magnum five-shooter, and an improvised shotgun and a handgun from the three men.

Suspect in slay of 2 women nabbed

By Margaux C. Ortiz

AFTER MORE THAN A WEEK in hiding, a man suspected of killing his two women friends in Tondo, Manila was arrested by operatives of the Manila Police District.

Insp. Victor Miparanum, acting chief of the MPD Homicide Section, said Jimmy Francisco Alfonso was nabbed in his aunt's home in Angono, Rizal shortly after midnight yesterday.

"We conducted follow-up operations in R. Papa and Tondo in Manila and in Guadalupe in Makati City before finally tracing his actual whereabouts," Miparanum said.

Alfonso admitted to reporters that he killed his two friends—waitresses Angie Binuya, 30, of Tondo, Manila and her neighbor, Genlen de Torres—last Jan. 4. "I hope their families will find it in their hearts to forgive me," Alfonso said in Filipino.

According to the police, the killing took place after a drinking spree in Binuya's house. The suspect confessed that he originally planned to rob his friends.

Miparanum said Alfonso hit De Torres with a metal pipe while Binuya was taking a bath. After slitting De Torres' neck with a knife, the suspect hit the second victim with the same pipe as she came out of the bathroom. Alfonso then slit Binuya's throat and stabbed her at least 40 times, Miparanum added.

"After cutting both victims' ring fingers, the suspect took the jewelry and P3,500 in cash," the police investigator said.

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THE 2006 RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Pursuant to the Securities Regulation Code (R.A. 8799), Corporation Code of the Philippines (B.P. 68), Presidential Decree No. 902-A, as amended, and other related laws, and in the interest of a just, speedy and inexpensive resolution of disputes and complaints over which the SEC has jurisdiction, the Commission hereby promulgates the following rules of procedure to govern actions and proceedings before it.

RULE I
General Provisions

SEC. 1-1. Title. – These Rules shall be known as the "The 2006 Rules of Procedure of the Securities and Exchange Commission".

SEC. 1-2. Definitions. – For purposes of these Rules, the following terms shall mean:

a. Commission – the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).
b. The Code, The SRC · the Securities Regulation Code or Republic Act (R.A) 8799.
c. Commissioner – the Chairperson or any of the Commissioners.
d. Commission En Banc – the Commissioners appointed pursuant to the Securities Regulation Code acting as a collegial body; it is the highest governing body of the Commission.
e. Operating Department – refers to the Company Registration and Monitoring Department (CRMD), Compliance and Enforcement Department (CED), Corporation Finance Department (CFD), Market Regulation Department (MRD), Non-Traditional Securities and Instruments Department (NTD), and Extension Offices (EOs).
f. Hearing Panel or Officer – any officer, body or panel duly designated or created through the pertinent office order by the Director (or Officer-in-Charge) of an Operating Department, or by the Commission pursuant to these Rules or by Resolution of the En Banc, to hear and decide a case or complaint. At least one member of the hearing panel shall be a member of the Philippine Bar.
g. Order – any directive, other than a Decision of a Hearing Panel or Officer.
h. Decision – means the whole or any part of the final disposition issued by a Hearing Panel or Officer, Operating Department or the Commission En Banc pertaining to any matter within its jurisdiction.
i. Corporation – also refers to a partnership, association or any other entity registered or licensed by the Commission.
j. Office of the General Accountant (OGA) - the office that advises, assists and provides technical support to the Commission and SEC Operating Departments on issues relating to accounting and auditing.
k. Office of the General Counsel (OGC) – the office that advises and assists the Commission and its Directors on legal issues that may be brought before them, and it may be assigned such other functions as may be delegated by the Commission En Banc.

SEC. 1-3. Construction. – These rules shall be liberally construed in order to promote public interest and assist the parties in obtaining a just, prompt, expeditious, and inexpensive resolution, settlement, and/or disposition of all actions brought before the Commission and to carry out the objectives of the laws it is mandated to implement.

The following rules shall be used in the interpretation of certain words and phrases found in these Rules:

(a) "Action" shall include any case, complaint or petition filed by a party before the Commission;
(b) "Complaint" or "complainant" shall have the same meaning as "petition" or "petitioner", respectively;
(c) Unless otherwise specified, the duties and responsibilities of a Director of an Operating Department as provided for in these Rules shall likewise devolve upon the Officer-in-Charge of the said department;
(d) The words "he" and "his" shall be construed as a collective reference to persons and not meant to give preferential treatment to the male gender.

SEC. 1-4. Nature of Proceedings. – Subject to the requirements of due process, the proceedings before the Commission shall be summary in nature and the technical rules of evidence used in the regular courts shall, whenever practicable, be suppletory to these Rules.

SEC. 1-5. Venue of Hearings. – As a general rule, all actions brought under these Rules shall be commenced and heard at the principal office of the Commission in Metro Manila. In cases where it involves a corporation, the principal office of which is located in a place where the Commission has an extension office, the action or complaint may be filed in the said extension office, provided that unless specified in the next following section or when the Commission en banc orders otherwise, the hearing of the action shall be held at the principal office of the Commission in Metro Manila.

SEC. 1-6. Jurisdiction of Operating Departments, Extension Offices and Special Offices over cases filed before the Commission. The Operating Departments, Extension Offices and Special Offices shall take jurisdiction over cases in accordance with their respective core functions.

SEC. 1-7. Assignment of Cases. – All actions filed with the Commission shall be assigned to a hearing panel or officer duly designated by the Director or Officer in Charge of the Operational Department which has jurisdiction over them, as the case may be, unless otherwise determined by the Commission En Banc.

RULE II
PARTIES

SEC. 2-1. Who may be Parties. – Only natural or juridical persons or entities authorized by law or a party in interest acting through an attorney-in-fact, where applicable, may be parties to any action before the Commission.

SEC. 2-2. Parties in Interest. – All actions filed with the Commission must be pursued and defended in the name of the real party in interest. All persons who have an interest in the subject of an action and in obtaining the relief demanded shall be joined as complainants. All persons who claim an interest in the controversy, or the subject thereof which is adverse to that of the complainant, or is necessary for a complete resolution or settlement of the action shall be joined as respondents.

SEC. 2-3. Intervention. – A natural or juridical person may, at any stage of the proceedings, be permitted by the Hearing Panel or Officer to intervene in an action or complaint if he has a legal interest therein or when he is so situated as to be adversely affected by the decision of the Commission.

The said party may file a motion to intervene or oppose the subject action before the Hearing Panel or Officer stating therein the reason for his intervention or opposition.

The motion should contain all the relevant supporting documents and, if allowed, shall be treated as a complaint-in-intervention. The Hearing Panel or Officer may require the original parties to the action to answer or comment on the intervention as the case may warrant or require them to submit their arguments against it in their position papers or memoranda prior to the submission of the action for resolution.

An answer to the intervention, when required by the Hearing Panel or Officer, should be filed within five (5) days from receipt of the corresponding order.

RULE III
COMMENCEMENT OF ACTION

SEC. 3-1. Commencement of Actions. – An action filed under these Rules shall be commenced by filing a verified complaint with supporting documents with the Operating Department that has jurisdiction over the subject matter.

SEC. 3-2. Definition of Action. – An action refers to the right of a party to avail of the procedures provided in these Rules to protect his interests and to expect a resolution based on the facts of the case and applicable laws.

SEC. 3-3. Pleadings Allowed. – The only pleadings that may be filed in any action are the complaint, answer, reply and rejoinder, if necessary, and motions in intervention.

SEC. 3-4. Verification. – The complaint and answer shall be verified by an affidavit that states that the affiant has read the complaint or answer and that the allegations therein are true and correct of his own personal knowledge and/or based on authentic records. A verification based on "information and belief," or which lacks the proper form of verification, shall be considered as improper and may cause the summary dismissal of the complaint or the expunging of the answer.

SEC. 3-5. Non-Forum Shopping. – The complainant shall certify under oath that: (a) he has not commenced any action or filed any complaint involving the same subject matter or issues in any court, tribunal or agency and, to the best of his knowledge, no such other action is pending therein; (b) if there is such other pending action, a complete statement of its present status; and (c) if he should thereafter learn that the same or similar action has been filed or is pending, he shall report that fact within five (5) days from such knowledge to the Operating Department concerned.

Failure to comply with any of the foregoing requirements shall result in the dismissal without prejudice of the complaint. The submission of a false certification or non-compliance with any of the undertakings enumerated in the preceding paragraph shall constitute indirect contempt of the Commission and may give rise to the imposition of administrative and criminal sanctions. If the acts of the party or his counsel constitute willful forum shopping, the same shall be considered a justifiable ground for the summary dismissal with prejudice of the action and constitute direct contempt of the Commission with the attendant administrative and criminal consequences.

SEC. 3-6. Prohibited Pleadings. – The following pleadings or any submission that is filed or made under a similar guise or title shall not be allowed:

a) Motion to Dismiss
b) Motion for a Bill of Particulars
c) Motion for New Trial, Reconsideration of Judgment or Order, or Reopening of Trial;
d) Petition for relief from judgment;
e) Motion for extension of time to file pleadings, affidavits, or any other submission of similar intent;
f) Motion to declare a party in default;
g) Motion for postponement and any other motions of similar intent; and
h) Motion for leave to amend pleadings.

Should one be filed, said prohibited pleadings or submissions shall be automatically expunged from the records of the case.

Notwithstanding sub-paragraph "g" above, the Hearing Panel or Officer may, for a compelling and valid reason, reset a hearing or conference not later than ten (10) business days thereafter.

SEC. 3-7. Duty of the Director of the Operating Department. - The Director shall, from an initial examination of the allegations or averments in the complaint and such evidence that may be attached to it, dismiss the complaint if he finds that it is insufficient in form and substance. Otherwise, he shall refer it to a Hearing Panel or Officer for investigation or examination. If the complaint has a valid and legal basis, he shall issue the appropriate summons to the parties concerned. All orders emanating from an Operating Department under this section shall be under the signature of its Director or Officer-in-Charge, as the case may be.

SEC. 3-8. Form of Pleadings. – All pleadings filed shall be written, printed or typed on bond paper in English or Pilipino.

Each pleading shall contain a caption stating the name of the Commission, the Operating Department that has jurisdiction over the action, the title of the case, the case number, if any, and a description of the pleading.

The original and three (3) signed copies of the pleading shall be filed with the Commission. All respondents shall be furnished with copies of the pleadings, except the complaint which shall be furnished by the Commission to the respondent as an attachment to the summons. Except for the initiatory pleading, there shall be filed as many additional signed copies of the said pleadings as there may be respondents.

No pleading shall be accepted by the Commission unless it conforms to the formal requirements provided for in these Rules.

SEC. 3-9. Verified Complaint. – The complaint shall contain the following information: (a) the names and residences of the parties; (b) a concise statement of the ultimate facts constituting the complainant's cause(s) of action; (c) a brief statement of the right(s) sought to be enforced; (d) the law, rule or regulation on which the complaint is based; (e) a summary of the complainant's claims; (f) a statement of the issues to be resolved; (g) the affidavits of witnesses, copies of documentary and other pieces of evidence; and (h) the relief(s) sought

This rule notwithstanding, the Commission may, *motu proprio*, accept and take cognizance of a complaint filed under a different form in the interest of public service and social justice, or to protect the investing public.

SEC. 3-10. Capacity. – The facts showing the capacity of a party to sue or be sued, or the authority of a party to sue or be sued in a representative capacity, or the legal existence of an organized association of persons that is made a party to an action must be averred. A party desiring to raise an issue on the legal existence of any party or the capacity of any party to sue or be sued in a representative capacity shall do so by specific denial and shall be supported by evidence that is within his knowledge. Failure to comply with this requirement shall be deemed a waiver of the right to question the capacity or authority of a party to sue or be sued.

SEC. 3-11. Answer. – Within fifteen (15) days from the service of summons, the respondent shall file his answer to the complaint and serve a copy thereof to the complainant. The answer shall contain the affidavits of witnesses and copies of documentary evidence, if any.

SEC. 3-12. Effect of Failure to Answer. – If the respondent fails to answer the complaint within the abovestated period, he shall be considered as in default. The Hearing Panel or Officer shall, *motu proprio*, proceed to render judgment granting the complainant such relief as the complaint may warrant, unless the Hearing Panel or Officer determines that the complainant should be required to submit *ex parte* additional evidence.

SEC. 3-13. Reply and Rejoinder. – Within ten (10) days from the service of the answer, the complainant may rebut any new matter raised in the answer by way of a reply. A rejoinder to the reply may be submitted by the respondent within five (5) days from receipt of the reply. The reply and rejoinder shall likewise contain the affidavits of witnesses and supporting documentary evidence, if any. The Hearing Panel or Officer may disallow the filing of a reply and rejoinder if in its/his opinion the same are not necessary under the circumstances

SEC. 3-14. Affidavits, Documents and Other Evidence. – The affidavits of the parties' respective witnesses, documents, and other supporting evidence shall be attached to the appropriate pleading.

Supporting affidavits shall be made on personal knowledge, shall set forth such facts as will be admissible in evidence, and shall show affirmatively that the affiant is competent to testify on the matters stated therein.

SEC. 3-15. Docket Fee. – A docket fee shall be assessed by the Operating Department concerned for any pleading filed under these Rules in accordance with the Schedule of Fees that shall form part of these Rules, and which fee shall be paid upon the filing of the subject pleading.

Schedule of Docket Fees in accordance with Section 3-15 of the SEC Revised Rules of Procedure

Departments	Complaints/ Petitions (inclusive of U.P. legal research fee)	Request for Opinion	Complaint (for misstatement of financial statements)	Complaint (for deviation from the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in the Philippines)	Complaint (for other than those described above)
Office of the General Counsel (OGC)	[illegible]	[illegible]			
Office of the General Accountant (OGA)		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] the value of the resulting adjustment [illegible] whichever is higher	[illegible]
Corporate Finance Department (CFD)	[illegible]	[illegible]			
Non Traditional Securities and Instruments Department (NTD)	[illegible]	[illegible]			
Company Registration and Monitoring Department (CRMD)	[illegible]	[illegible]			
Compliance and Enforcement Department (CED)	[illegible]	[illegible]			
Market Regulation Department (MRD)					

SEC. 3-16. Proof of Service. – Proof of service shall consist of a written admission of the party served, or the official return of the server, or the affidavit of the party serving, containing a full statement of the date, place and manner of service. If the service is by ordinary mail, proof thereof shall consist of an affidavit of the person who undertook the mailing of facts showing compliance with section 7, Rule 13 of the Rules of Court. If service is made by registered mail, proof shall be made by such affidavit and the registry receipt issued by the mailing office. The registry return card shall be filed immediately upon its receipt by the sender, or in lieu thereof the unclaimed letter together with the certified or sworn copy of the notice given by the postmaster to the addressee.

If the service is by facsimile or by any other electronic means in accordance with existing laws, proof of service shall be made in writing by the designated server setting forth the manner, place and date of service, or a written admission of the party served.

RULE IV
SUMMONS

SEC. 4-1. Summons. – Upon the filing of the complaint and payment of filing fees, and determination by the Director of the Operating Department's jurisdiction over it and its sufficiency in form and substance, the proper summons to the respondent shall be issued by the Director not later than ten (10) days from the date of filing of the complaint.

SEC. 4-2. Contents. – The summons shall be directed to the respondent under the seal of the Commission and shall contain:

a. The names of the parties to the action;
b. An order to the respondent to answer within the time fixed by these Rules; and
c. A notice that if the respondent fails to file its answer within the prescribed period, a judgment by default may be rendered in favor of the complainant and the relief(s) applied for may be granted.

SEC. 4-3. Alias Summons. – If the summons is returned unserved on any or all of the respondents or is lost, the Director at the instance of the complainant, may issue one (1) alias summons in the same form as the original summons.

SEC. 4-4. By Whom Summons May Be Served. – The summons may be served by the designated server of the Commission.

SEC. 4-5. Return of Summons. – When the service has been completed, the designated server shall return the summons, together with the proof of service, to the originating Operating Department.

SEC. 4-6. Personal Service of Summons. – The summons shall be served by handing a copy thereof to the respondent in person or, if he refuses to receive it, by tendering it to him. If the respondent is a corporation, partnership or association, service shall be made on its president, managing partner, general manager, corporate secretary, treasurer, or in-house counsel.

SEC. 4-7. Substituted Service. – If, for justifiable reasons, the respondent cannot be served personally with the summons as provided in the preceding section, service may be effected either (a) by leaving a copy of the summons at the respondent's dwelling house or residence where some person of suitable age and discretion is residing, or (b) by leaving a copy at the respondent's principal office or regular place of business where some competent person is in charge.

SEC. 4-8. Service Upon Private Foreign Entities. – If the respondent is a foreign corporation doing business in the Philippines, service may be made on its resident agent designated in accordance with existing law for that purpose, or, if there is no such agent, the Commission shall transmit a copy of the summons to the home office of said foreign entity by registered mail, by facsimile or by any other electronic means in accordance with existing laws. The period to answer shall be thirty (30) days from receipt of the summons by the home office, with the expenses that may be incurred by the Commission for such service paid in advance by the parties at whose instance the service was made

SEC. 4-9. Service by Publication. – If the address of a respondent is unknown or, even if known, his whereabouts cannot be ascertained by diligent inquiry, service of summons may, by leave of the Director of the Operating Department concerned, be effected on him by publication of the complaint once in a newspaper of general circulation and in such places, including the Commission's website *(www.sec.gov.ph)*, and for such time as the Director may order. The publication expenses shall be for the complainant's account.

If the respondent does not reside or is not found in the Philippines, service may, by leave of the Director be effected out of the Philippines by personal service in the manner provided for in Section 4-8 of these Rules; or by publication of the complaint once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines and/or the country where respondent may be found and in such places as the Director may order such as but not limited to, the Commission's website. A copy of the complaint and the order granting such leave shall be sent by registered mail to the last known address of the respondent.

Any order granting such leave shall specify a reasonable time within which the respondent must answer, which shall not be less than thirty (30) days from the date of last publication, in the case of a resident respondent whose address is unknown or whose whereabouts cannot be ascertained; and not less than sixty (60) days from the date of the last publication, in the case of a non-resident respondent.

Any application for leave to effect service of summons by publication shall be made by motion in writing and supported by an affidavit of the complainant or some person on his behalf, setting forth the grounds for the application.

SEC. 4-10. Proof of Service. – The proof of service of a summons shall be made in writing by the designated server setting forth the manner, place and date of service. It shall specify the papers served with the summons and the name of the person who received them, and shall be sworn to when made by a person other than the server of the Commission.

Service by publication on a resident respondent whose address is unknown or whose whereabouts cannot be ascertained may be proven by the affidavit of the newspaper editor, or business/advertising manager or SEC website administrator and to which affidavit a copy of the publication shall be attached.

Service by publication on a non-resident respondent may be proven, aside from the affidavit of the editor, business/advertising manager, or SEC website administrator, by the affidavit of the server stating that a copy of the complaint and the order of the Commission was sent by registered mail to the last known address of the respondent.

The respondent's voluntary appearance before the Commission shall be equivalent to service of summons for purposes of acquiring jurisdiction over his person, unless he makes an express reservation regarding on the nature of his appearance therein

RULE V
PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL OR OFFICER

SEC. 5-1. Preliminary Conference. – In any action and upon assignment by the Director of the Operating Department concerned, the Hearing Panel or Officer shall, in compliance with the existing rules on alternative dispute resolution, set the case for conference within ten (10) days after the last pleading allowed under Section 3-13 is filed or upon expiration of the period within which to file the reply or rejoinder mentioned therein. The parties and/or their counsels the latter with the requisite special power-of-attorney in the absence of his client shall be directed to appear before the Hearing Panel or Officer on the date set in the notice to consider the following actions:

a. The possibility of an amicable settlement which includes referral to mediation and other forms of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):
b. The simplification of the issues; and
c. Such other matters that may aid in the just and speedy disposition of the case.

The Hearing Panel or Officer shall terminate the conference stage if after two (2) conferences, the parties fail to settle their differences.

SEC. 5-2. Amicable Settlement. – During the conference, the Hearing Panel or Officer shall ensure that the parties exhaust all available means to arrive at a fair and reasonable settlement of the case. The parties, with or without the assistance of counsel, shall submit during the conference specific proposals or counter-proposals to arrive at an amicable settlement of the case.

Amicable settlement shall be encouraged at any stage of the proceedings provided it is not prejudicial to the public interest or third parties, or contrary to law, rules or regulations of the Commission, or against good morals or public policy. The amicable settlement shall be reduced into writing, duly signed by the parties and/or their counsels, and shall be the basis of the appropriate Order or Decision of the Hearing Panel or Officer.

SEC. 5-3. Failure to Appear at the Conference. – The failure of the complainant to appear at the conference shall result in the dismissal of the complaint, unless it involves public interest whereby the Hearing Panel or Officer may, *motu proprio*, reset the case for conference within five (5) days from receipt of proof of service of new summons. The respondent who appears in the absence of the complainant shall be entitled to judgment based on the facts alleged and relief(s) prayed for in the answer.

If the sole respondent fails to appear, the complainant shall be entitled to judgment in accordance with the immediately preceding paragraph. However, this rule shall not apply if one or more respondents who have been sued under a common cause of action and who have pleaded a common defense appear at the conference.

No other conferences, other than the circumstance mentioned in the first paragraph of this section, shall be called in the event any of the parties to the action is absent or fails to attend the first conference called for this purpose, except for valid reasons as determined by the Hearing Panel or Officer.

SEC. 5-4. Conference Order. – After the conference, the Hearing Panel or Officer shall issue an Order stating the action taken during the conference, the stipulations made by the parties on any of the matters considered, and the evidence the parties have agreed upon.

RULE VI
DECISION

SEC. 6-1. Decision. - The Hearing Panel or Officer shall decide the complaint within thirty (30) days from its submission for resolution. The Decision shall contain a clear statement of the facts proven or admitted by the parties and the law on which the resolution is based. The Decision shall be signed by the Director of the Operating Department concerned and be served on the parties not later than ten (10) days after its promulgation.

SEC. 6-2. Finality of Decision. – The Decision of the Hearing Panel or Officer, in the absence of a timely appeal, shall become final and executory upon entry in the Book of Entry of Judgment.

SEC. 6-3. Clarificatory Conference. – Notwithstanding the immediately preceding section, at any time after the case has been submitted for resolution, the hearing panel/officer may, in his discretion, require a further clarificatory examination of documents, or submission of additional documentation to ascertain factual issues pertinent and necessary to the resolution/decision of the case. Nothing herein shall be construed to extend the period for decision stated in Sec. 6-1 above.

RULE VII
CONTEMPT

SEC. 7-1. Direct Contempt. – The Commission or the Hearing Panel or any authorized officer may summarily pass judgment on acts of direct contempt committed in the presence of, or so near, the Chairman or any Commissioner or Hearing Panel or Officer as to obstruct or interrupt the proceedings, including disrespect towards the Hearing Panel or Officer, offensive acts towards others, and other contumacious acts. Those found to be in direct contempt shall be punished in accordance with the penalties prescribed by the Rules of Court. The Hearing Panel or Officer may, through the OGC, request the law enforcement agencies of the locality where the hearing or investigation is being conducted to assist in the exercise of this disciplinary authority.

SEC. 7-2. Indirect Contempt. – The Commission or the Hearing Panel or Officer may, after observance of due process, cite or punish any person for indirect contempt on any of the grounds prescribed under the Revised Rules of Court.

RULE VIII
SUBPOENA AND SUBPOENA DUCES TECUM

SEC. 8-1. When Issued. – If the attendance of a witness or the production of specified documents is necessary, any Operating Department or any party can request the issuance of a subpoena or subpoena duces tecum in the course of any investigation or in any proceeding of the Commission. Provided, however, that the CED may, *motu proprio*, issue a subpoena pursuant to an investigation.

RULE IX
PRODUCTION OR INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS OR THINGS

SEC. 9-1. Motion for Production or Inspection Order. – Upon motion of any party showing good cause therefor, the Hearing Panel or Officer may (a) order any party to produce and permit the inspection and copying or photographing, by or on behalf of the requesting party, of any designated

Continued on next page

New officials take over Pasay City posts

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ACTING PASAY MAYOR ALLAN Panaligan, who took over from Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad, was sworn in yesterday as the city's chief executive on a permanent basis, three days after the Office of the Ombudsman ordered the dismissal from government service of Trinidad and other local officials on graft charges.

Rodolfo Feraren, Department of Interior and Local Government director for the National Capital Region also administered the oath of office to acting Vice Mayor Arvin Tolentino after serving the dismissal order to Trinidad.

Trinidad, Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto and 10 city councilors were ordered suspended for six months beginning last September for approving allegedly anomalous garbage contracts.

Yesterday, however, they came to City Hall to try to reclaim their posts.

Former Sen. Rene Saguisag, who said he was the officials' consultant, said that Trinidad and company should be reinstated because the Ombudsman's order issued last Friday, in effect, terminated their suspension.

He added that since the dismissal order was not yet final, the suspended mayor and the other officials should be allowed to reclaim their posts.

"The dismissal order is not yet final and executory so they don't just have the right but also the obligation to take charge of the mandate given to them by the people of Pasay City or else, there will be dereliction of their duties," Saguisag told reporters.

The other suspended officials—Councilors Richard Advincula, Lexter Ibay, Jose Antonio Roxas, Arnel Arceo, Editha Vergel de Dios, Ma. Irish Pineda and Greg Paolo Alcera—also asked Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno in a letter to immediately order the acting city officials to vacate their offices to allow them to reclaim their posts.

According to Trinidad, the latest Ombudsman decision negated the suspension order against him. "There is a dismissal order but that is not yet final. So who is going to be the mayor now?" he asked.

"We are going to question the decision in court. It's the people who are going to defy it. Let us fight them in the elections," he said firmly. Saguisag said they would file a motion for reconsideration before the Ombudsman on or before Wednesday.

SUSPENDED Pasay City officials Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad (right) and Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto with lawyer Rene Saguisag (center): Fight not yet over. ERIK ARAZAS

METROBRIEFS

40 years for murder

A MANILA court yesterday sentenced a 36-year-old man to suffer a maximum of 40 years imprisonment for stabbing to death a rookie policeman who was trying to arrest an armed suspect in Sta. Mesa last year. In her decision, Judge Marivic Balisi-Umali of Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 20 found Joseph Asilan guilty beyond reasonable doubt of murder for killing PO1 Randy Adovas, 29, assigned at the Philippine National Police Regional Special Action Unit (PNP-RSAU) in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City. The court also ordered the accused to indemnify the heirs of the victim P160,000 in damages. Court records showed that last March, the victim had attempted to arrest a still unidentified suspect for illegal possession of a deadly weapon when the accused arrived and stabbed the policeman several times.

Tina G. Santos

Navotas fiesta rerouting

MOTORISTS on their way to Navotas today are advised to look for alternate routes with the closure of the town's main roads from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. to give way to the Grand Parade, one of the major highlights of the town's 101st Foundation Day celebration. To be closed to traffic are M. Naval Street, Gov. Andres Pascual Street, North Bay Boulevard and C-4 and C-3 Roads. Mayor Toby Tiangco will lead the parade at 1 p.m. He will be joined by special guest, actress Angelica Panganiban, and officials and residents of the town's 14 barangays. Joining the parade are some 10,000 marchers and floats from schools, religious and nongovernment organizations, the business sector and municipal government. Street performers, drum and bugles, drum and lyres, mascots, clowns and jugglers will line up the parade route to provide color to the event.

Ridiculous security measures at the Summit

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE TIGHT MEASURES TAKEN BY the government to secure the heads of state attending the Asean Summit are understandable, especially in light of the General Santos bombing. But some measures were outrageous.

I learned about this when I was in Cebu City Saturday to stand as sponsor at the wedding of the daughter of a high school classmate, Clarita Pelias-Veloso.

The wedding almost didn't take place on the scheduled date when the Presidential Security Group (PSG) ordered it reset it for another day.

But Clarita, widow of Leyte Rep. Alberto Veloso, stood up to the PSG. It took the Velosos a year to plan the wedding and nothing would stop it on its scheduled date, Jan. 13, 2007.

The Asean Summit originally scheduled for Dec. 9 to 13, 2006, was postponed to Jan. 10-15 this year, ostensibly due to a strong typhoon that, however, did not hit Cebu City last year.

The bride and groom, Clarice and Silvio Lugo, and some of their guests started arriving from the United States as early as Jan. 10. They checked in at the Shangri-La Hotel on Mactan Island, site of the wedding reception. They had booked a year in advance.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, and Asean heads of state were also billeted at the same hotel, creating a problem. The PSG asked Clarita to move the wedding date to Jan. 15. No way, Clarita said. Apparently under pressure from the PSG, the hotel asked the wedding party to move elsewhere. Clarita threatened to sue the hotel management if it insisted in driving them out. The PSG then required a National Bureau of Investigation clearance from the guests, even if most of them, including the bride and groom, came from the United States. Again, Clarita stood her ground. During the wedding, PSG members inspected bags and frisked the men.

It was okay for the government to take stringent measures to secure the summit. But the people tasked to carry them out should not be "OA" or over-acting.

DID YOU KNOW

THE NATIONAL Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTI), located on East Avenue in Quezon City, is the first establishment in Asia to perform double transplants of the kidney and pancreas (March 1988), and of the kidney and liver (September 1990). It has performed 2,000 kidney transplants as of 2002. NKTI was known as the National Kidney Foundation of the Philippines (NKFP) when it was created on Jan. 16, 1981 by Ferdinand Marcos' Presidential Decree 1832. Before its own building was completed in 1985, NKFP was housed in the Lung Center of the Philippines compound in Quezon City.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

From A18

documents, papers, books, accounts, letters, photographs, objects or tangible things, not otherwise privileged, which constitute or contain evidence material to any matter involved in the complaint and are in his possession, custody or control; or (b) order any party to permit entry into a designated place or other property in his possession or control for the purpose of inspecting, measuring, surveying, or photographing the property or any designated relevant object of operation in the premises.

The order shall specify the time, place and manner of the inspection and taking of copies and photographs, and may prescribe other terms and conditions that are justified by the circumstances; Provided, however, that the request for production or inspection of documents or things shall be made before or during the conference and only for documents and things previously referred to in the complaint, answer or other pertinent pleadings.

RULE X
CEASE AND DESIST ORDER

SEC. 10-1. Who May Apply. – A verified complaint may be filed by the aggrieved party with the Commission, through the CED, for the issuance of a Cease and Desist Order (CDO) pursuant to the provisions of Section 64 of the SRC.

SEC. 10-2. Issuance of a CDO. – The Commission, through the OGC, after proper investigation or verification by the CED, *motu proprio*, or upon verified complaint, may issue a CDO without the necessity of a prior hearing if in its judgment the act or practice, unless restrained, will operate as a fraud on investors or is otherwise likely to cause grave or irreparable injury or prejudice to the investing public.

For other cases however, the Commission En Banc may issue an order for the grant of a CDO as it may deem necessary and warranted in accordance with its powers under existing laws. The CDO shall also be available in the case of anonymous complaints or based on information that has come to its attention which requires immediate action to protect the interests of the public.

SEC. 10-3. Lifting of CDO. – A party against whom a CDO was issued may, within a non-extendible period of five (5) business days from receipt of the order, file a formal request or motion for the lifting thereof with the OGC. Said motion or request shall be set for hearing by the OGC not later that fifteen (15) days from its filing and the resolution thereof shall be made not later than ten (10) days from the termination of the hearing.

SEC. 10-4. Who May Issue a Provisional Remedy. – A provisional remedy may be issued by the Director of the CED on the basis of his initial evaluation of the issue, or upon the recommendation of the Hearing Panel or Officer, as the case may be.

The Commission En Banc, however, may issue an order for the grant of a CDO as it may deem necessary and warranted in accordance with its powers under existing laws. The CDO shall also be available in the case of anonymous complaints or based on information that has come to its attention which requires immediate action to protect the interests of the public.

SEC. 10-5. Failure to File Motion to Lift. - (a) If the respondent fails to file a motion to lift CDO within the prescribed period, the Director of the CED may file with the Commission a motion to make the CDO permanent, attaching thereto a draft Order making the CDO permanent. The Order shall contain the following:

- i. a brief and procedural history of the case;
- ii. a statement declaring the CDO as permanent;
- iii. a statement ordering the respondent to appear before the Commission within fifteen (15) days to file its Comment and to show cause why the stated penalty should not be imposed.

(b) The Commission may conduct hearing within fifteen (15) business days from the filing of the motion to make the CDO permanent. After the termination of the hearing, the Commission shall resolve the motion within ten (10) business days.

SEC. 10-6. Dissemination of the CDO. - Upon the issuance of a CDO, the CED shall (a) serve it on the respondent/s or any of its authorized representatives; (b) post copies of the order at the entrance of the main office and/or branches, if any, of the respondent/s, and (c) post it in the Commission's Internet website. The CDO may, as determined by the Director of the CED and at the discretion of the Commission, be published in newspapers of general circulation or other media outlets.

SEC. 10-7. Automatic Lifting of the CDO. - (a) In the event that the motion or request to lift the CDO is not resolved within the prescribed period, the CDO shall be automatically lifted.

SEC. 10-8. Prohibitions. – No pleading, motion or submission in any form that may prevent the resolution of an application for a CDO by the Commission shall be entertained except under Rule XII herein. A CDO, when issued, shall not be the subject of an appeal and no appeal from it will be entertained; Provided, however, that an order by the Director of the Operating Department denying the motion to lift a CDO may be appealed to the Commission En Banc through the OGC

SEC. 10-9. Settlement Offers. - A settlement offer in accordance with Sec. 55 of the SRC and SRC Rule 55.1, shall be made in writing and signed by the party making the offer at any stage of the proceedings, *provided*, that no settlement offer shall be accepted after an Order shall have become final and executory, *provided further*, that if the respondent is a juridical person, the necessary board resolution shall also be attached to the offer

SEC. 10-10. Criteria for Settlement Offer. - (a) In recommending the approval or if the Operating Department's recommendation is unfavorable but the proposer so requests that the offer be presented to the Commission En Banc, the Director of the CED, after consultation with the handling lawyer/team, shall prepare a memorandum for the Commission, taking into consideration the following:

- i. The gravity of the offense;
- ii. The amount and time spent by the Commission;
- iii. The chances of a favorable decision if the case were to go to trial.
- iv. Whether the respondent has previously violated any provision of any law being administered by the Commission:
- v The total imposable penalty;
- vi. The damage caused, if any;
- vii. Whether the settlement is in the public interest.
- viii. Other pertinent matters.

(b) No settlement offer that is less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total imposable penalty or damage caused shall be accepted.

RULE XI
APPEALS FROM DECISIONS OR ORDERS OF OPERATING DEPARTMENTS

SEC. 11-1. Ordinary Appeal. – An appeal to the Commission En Banc may be taken from a decision, order, or resolution issued by an Operating Department if there are questions of fact, of law, or mixed questions of fact and law.

SEC. 11-2. How Appeal is Taken. – Appeal may be taken by serving upon the adverse party and filing with the Commission En Banc within fifteen (15) days from notice of Decision, Order or Ruling, a Notice of Appeal and a Memorandum on Appeal and paying the corresponding docket fee therefor. Provided, that no appeal shall be given due course unless it includes a certification of non-filing of multiple petitions and complaints provided for in Section 3-5 hereof.

SEC. 11-3. Perfection of Appeal. – The appeal shall be deemed perfected upon the filing of the Memorandum on Appeal and payment of the required docket fee within the period provided for in these Rules.

SEC. 11-4. Memorandum on Appeal; Form and Contents of Appeal . The Memorandum on Appeal shall specify the parties to the appeal: designate the Decision, Order or Ruling or part thereof appealed from; and shall indicate the material dates to show that the appeal was seasonably filed.

The full names of all the parties to the proceedings shall be stated in the caption of the Memorandum on Appeal and shall include the decision, order or ruling from which the appeal is taken, and, in chronological order, copies of any such pleadings, petition, motions and all interlocutory orders as are related to the appealed decision, order or ruling and necessary for the proper understanding of the issues involved, together with such date as will show that the appeal was perfected on time. The Memorandum on Appeal in seven (7) copies shall contain a concise statement of facts and issues involved, the errors assigned, the grounds relied upon for the appeal and the arguments in support thereof.

SEC. 11-5. Reply Memorandum. - The appellee shall file seven (7) copies of the reply memorandum with the Commission En Banc, furnishing copies thereof to the appellant within ten (10) days from receipt of the Order to file reply memorandum.

Failure to file the reply memorandum within the prescribed period in the Order shall be construed as a waiver to file the same.

SEC. 11-6. Dismissal of Appeal for Non-Compliance. – The appeal may be dismissed by the Commission En Banc for failure to comply with these Rules, or failure to perfect the appeal within the prescribed period.

SEC. 11-7. When Appeal Deemed Submitted for Decision. – Upon the filing of the reply memorandum with the Commission En Banc, or after the expiration of the period to file the same and no such memorandum has been filed, the appeal shall be deemed submitted for decision, unless the Commission En Banc *motu propio*, or upon motion and for special reason, sets the case for oral arguments

SEC. 11-8. Review Standard. – Findings of fact by the Operating Department shall not be disturbed by the Commission En Banc unless serious errors of fact have been committed.

SEC. 11-9. Disposition of the Appeal. – The Commission En Banc may affirm, reverse or modify the Decision, Order or ruling appealed from, or direct further proceedings to be taken thereon. No motion for reconsideration of the Decision of the Commission En Banc shall be entertained

RULE XII
PETITION FOR REVIEW ON CERTIORARI

SEC. 12-1. Petition for Review on Certiorari. When any Hearing Officer/Panel of the Commission, has acted without or in excess of its jurisdiction, or with grave abuse of discretion and there is no appeal, nor any plain, speedy and adequate remedy in the ordinary course of law, a person aggrieved thereby may file a verified petition with the Commission En Banc alleging the facts with certainty and praying that judgment be rendered annulling or modifying the proceedings, order or ruling of such Hearing Officer or Panel and granting such relief as the applicable laws may require.

The Petition shall be accompanied by a certified true copy of the Judgment, Order or Ruling subject thereof, together with the copies of all pleadings and documents relevant thereto. Provided that no petition for review on certiorari shall be given due course unless it includes a certification of non-filing of multiple petitions and complaints provided for in Section 3-5 hereof.

SEC. 12-2. Where petition filed. The petition shall be filed with the Commission En Banc in seven (7) copies, within ten (10) days from receipt of the order or ruling subject of the petition, furnishing a copy thereof to the party interested in sustaining the order and the Hearing Officer/Panel who issued the same.

SEC. 12-3. Parties Respondent. When the Petition filed relates to the acts or omission of a Hearing Officer of the Commission, the petitioner shall join, as parties respondent, the person or persons interested in sustaining the order; and it shall be the duty of such person or persons to defend the questioned order or ruling.

SEC. 12-4. Order to Answer. If the Petition is sufficient in form and substance to justify such process, the Commission En Banc shall issue an order requiring the respondent/s to answer the petition within ten (10) days from receipt of a copy thereof. Such order shall be served to the respondent in such manner as the Commission En Banc may direct.

SEC. 12-5. Expediting Proceedings. The Commission En Banc may issue any and all orders that shall expedite the proceedings.

SEC. 12-6. Summary Proceedings. The proceedings before the Commission En Banc shall be summary in nature. Upon receipt of the verified petition, the Commission En Banc may either dismiss the petition if it is not sufficient in form and substance or if it is filed manifestly for delay or if from its face there is no showing that in issuing the questioned Order or Ruling, the Hearing Officer/Panel acted without or in excess of jurisdiction, or with grave abuse of discretion. It may require the party or parties interested in sustaining the questioned Order or Ruling, to Comment or Answer thereon within ten (10) days from notice upon the filing of which the petition is deemed submitted for resolution, unless the Commission En Banc sets the case for oral arguments

SEC. 12-7. Stay of the Action. No petition for review or certiorari shall stay the progress of the action in the main case unless the Commission En Banc orders otherwise. The Commission En Banc may also issue a status quo Order for the preservation of the rights of the parties during the pendency of the proceedings.

RULE XIII
EFFECTIVITY

SEC. 13-1. Transitory Provisions. - All matters pending resolution before the Commission under other rules of procedure that have been submitted for resolution at the time of the approval of these Rules shall be decided under the said rules. In all other cases, these Rules shall apply.

SEC. 13-2. Repeal and Separability. – All existing rules, regulations or orders or any part thereof that are inconsistent with these Rules are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly. If any part or provision of these Rules is declared unconstitutional or illegal, the other parts or provisions shall remain valid.

SEC. 13-3. Effectivity. – These Rules shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Mandaluyong City, December 21, 2006.

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Chairperson

MA. JUANITA E. CUETO
Commissioner

JESUS E. G. MARTINEZ
Commissioner

RAUL J. PALABRICA
Commissioner

THADDEUS E. VENTURANZA
Commissioner

(PDI—Jan. 16, 2007)

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Saddam half-brother, aide hanged

SADDAM'S half-brother and former intelligence chief Barzan al-Tikriti (right) and Awad Ahmed al-Bandar, the former head of the "revolutionary court" in Nov. 5, 2006 photo. AFP

BAGHDAD—SADDAM HUSSEIN'S HALF-brother and the former head of Iraq's Revolutionary Court were hanged Monday, two weeks after the deposed Iraqi dictator's bungled execution drew worldwide condemnation.

An Iraqi government official said there had been "no violations" during the early morning executions but that the head of Saddam's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, had been ripped from his body.

Former intelligence chief Barzan and Awad Ahmed al-Bandar, the former head of Iraq's Revolutionary Court, died before dawn, Iraqi government spokesperson Ali al-Dabbagh told a news conference.

Dabbagh said that Barzan had been decapitated during his hanging, while Basem Ridha, an advisor to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki called the "incident" an "act of God."

"There was an incident that happened, that is the separation between the body of Barzan and the head. This happens seldom but it did happen and there was an act of God and it was a normal process. It has happened before," said Ridha.

The two condemned men had been found guilty of crimes against humanity for the killing of 148 Shiites from the village of Dujail in the 1980s.

They were sentenced to death on Nov. 5 by a special court along with Saddam, whose execution on Dec. 30 was roundly condemned for the way it was handled by the Iraqi authorities.

Ridha told media in comments translated from Dabbagh's statement that "the execution took place in a very high manner, there were no violations reported."

"Every member of the execution committee signed a document to behave properly," he added in reference to the controversy surrounding the hanging of Saddam.

The two officials declined to reveal where the execution was carried out.

Ridha said that the bodies of Barzan and Bandar were to be turned over to their families in the "next couple of days."

"We will invite their families to take the bodies."

A relative of Barzan earlier told AFP they had been asked to take his body.

"Before he died, Awad al-Bandar also asked to be buried near Saddam Hussein," the source added. Saddam has been buried in his home village of Awja in northern Iraq.

Jordanian lawyer and member of the defense team Issam al-Ghazzawi told AFP in Amman that the hangings had come as a surprise.

"On Friday, we were in Baghdad where we met Barzan and Bandar and no one informed us of the execution date despite our request to have a representative of our committee present when the sentence was applied," he said.

The outcry over Saddam's hanging had seen the execution of Barzan and Bandar postponed several times.

The White House in its reaction to Monday's hangings said the Iraqi government was bringing "justice" to those guilty of crimes against the Iraqi people.

"Iraq is a sovereign government exercising its judicial system to bring justice to those convicted for brutal crimes against humanity," White House spokesperson Scott Stanzel told AFP.

Stanzel said he did not know whether President George W. Bush had been informed of the new hangings in advance as he had been in the case of Saddam.

Maliki had said after Saddam's hanging that the government was determined to carry out the execution of his two aides, calling their hangings an "internal matter" of Iraq. *AFP*

Crimes against humanity

IRAQ—SADDAM HUSSEIN'S half-brother Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti and former chief judge Awad Ahmed al-Bandar were hanged on Monday for crimes against humanity, Iraqiya state television said, quoting a source close to the government.

The following are brief profiles of the two men, who were sentenced in the killing of 148 Shiites from Dujail in the 1980s.

- **Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti.** Saddam's half-brother, 14 years his junior, Barzan was head of the feared Mukhabarat intelligence service from 1979 to 1983.

Witnesses in the trial said he personally oversaw torture, eating grapes as he watched on one occasion, and had a meat grinder for human flesh at his interrogation facility.

He was Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva from 1988 to 1997, where he is remembered as an elegantly-suited man dubbed "Saddam's banker in the West." Barzan was captured by US special forces in Baghdad in April 2003. He was the five of clubs in a US deck of playing cards representing the most wanted men in Iraq.

As intelligence chief, Barzan was accused of ordering mass murder and torture, and of personally taking part in human rights abuses, including the destruction of Kurdish villages.

Barzan's then teenage eldest daughter married Saddam's playboy eldest son Uday in 1993, though Uday later rejected her and sent her back to her father.

Barzan, believed to be aged 55 at his death, was suffering from cancer but that did not stop him from mounting spirited attacks on the court and its US backers.

Taking the stand in his own defense last March, he said Saddam had a right to punish those who tried to kill him, but denied any part in the reprisals, saying: "My hands are as clean as Moses' hands. I have no blood on my hands."

- **Awad Hamed al-Bandar** Bandar, aged around 61, was a former chief judge in Saddam's Revolutionary Court, which was accused of organizing show trials that often led to summary executions.

Bandar was the judge in charge of trying many of the 148 Shiite men killed after a failed assassination bid on Saddam in 1982.

Prosecutors said he sentenced some of the men from Dujail after they had already been killed, and that among those sentenced were under-18s who could not legally be executed.

Bandar's defense lawyer was abducted from his office and killed the day after the trial started.

When the trial opened in October 2005, Bandar, in a plain white traditional robe, sat at Saddam's right hand in the court, loudly demanding and then donning a checkered Arab headdress as proceedings got under way.

He sat quietly throughout most of the court sessions, though always quick to back up Saddam and Barzan in their frequent battles of will with the judge. *Reuters*

US military apologizes for S. Korea rape

SEOUL—US MILITARY authorities in South Korea have apologized over the alleged rape of a 67-year-old local woman by a US soldier, saying the case was "an affront" to all servicemen, officials said Monday.

The apology came hours after South Korean police arrested a 23-year-old US soldier for allegedly raping and beating the woman in an alley in Seoul.

Major General John Morgan, the acting US 8th Army commander, said in a statement posted on the US military website late Sunday that the case tainted the reputation of US soldiers.

"I deeply regret and personally apologize for this terrible incident that has resulted in grave injury to a Korean civilian," Morgan said.

"This vicious act is an affront to all soldiers."

The arrested soldier initially refused to cooperate with police pending the arrival of US legal officers, according to South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

Morgan said the US military was "cooperating fully with Korean authorities" over the case and a joint investigation was underway.

Police want to obtain court permission to detain the soldier in South Korean rather than US military custody. The victim is receiving treatment at a nearby hospital.

Some 29,000 US troops are stationed here to support the South Korean armed forces against any attack from North Korea. *AFP*

DR. SANDUL RUIT (left) during a missionary work in Tibet in an undated photo. The Nepalese doctor, who has given back sight to 70,000 patients in the poorest parts of Asia with his technique for cataract surgery, is the first Reader's Digest Asian of the year awardee.

Sight restorer 'Asian of the year'

FOR HIS HUMANITARIAN AND EXTRAORDINARY achievements, Dr. Sanduk Ruit has been named the first Reader's Digest Asian of the Year for 2007.

In the last 23 years, Ruit has been performing miracles. He has helped restore the eyesight of many of Asia's poorest people, rescuing them from a lifetime of misery. The 52-year-old doctor has personally conducted close to 70,000 cataract surgeries, often saving more than 100 people a day from blindness. By developing simpler and cheaper techniques, he has brought the cataract procedure within reach of thousands in Asia who could not otherwise have access to it.

Ruit travels across Asia to teach his methods. He likes to go to countries with the greatest need.

The Reader's Digest Asian of The Year is selected by the Asian editors of Reader's Digest magazine as the person who best embodies the contemporary expression of Asia's value and traditions.

"We wanted somebody who is working to shape the future of Asia, somebody we can look up to, somebody we can be proud of," says Jim Plouffe, editor in chief of the English magazine in Asia.

Ruit will be receiving the honor and a check of $5,000 in an official ceremony to be held in India.

"I feel greatly encouraged by this award and it will help me further my prospects of the fight against blindness particularly in this part of the world. I have plans to go for surgical camps and training the locals in North Korea, Burma (Myanmar) and China. I will probably use the award money in future cataract research, which is close to my heart," says Ruit.

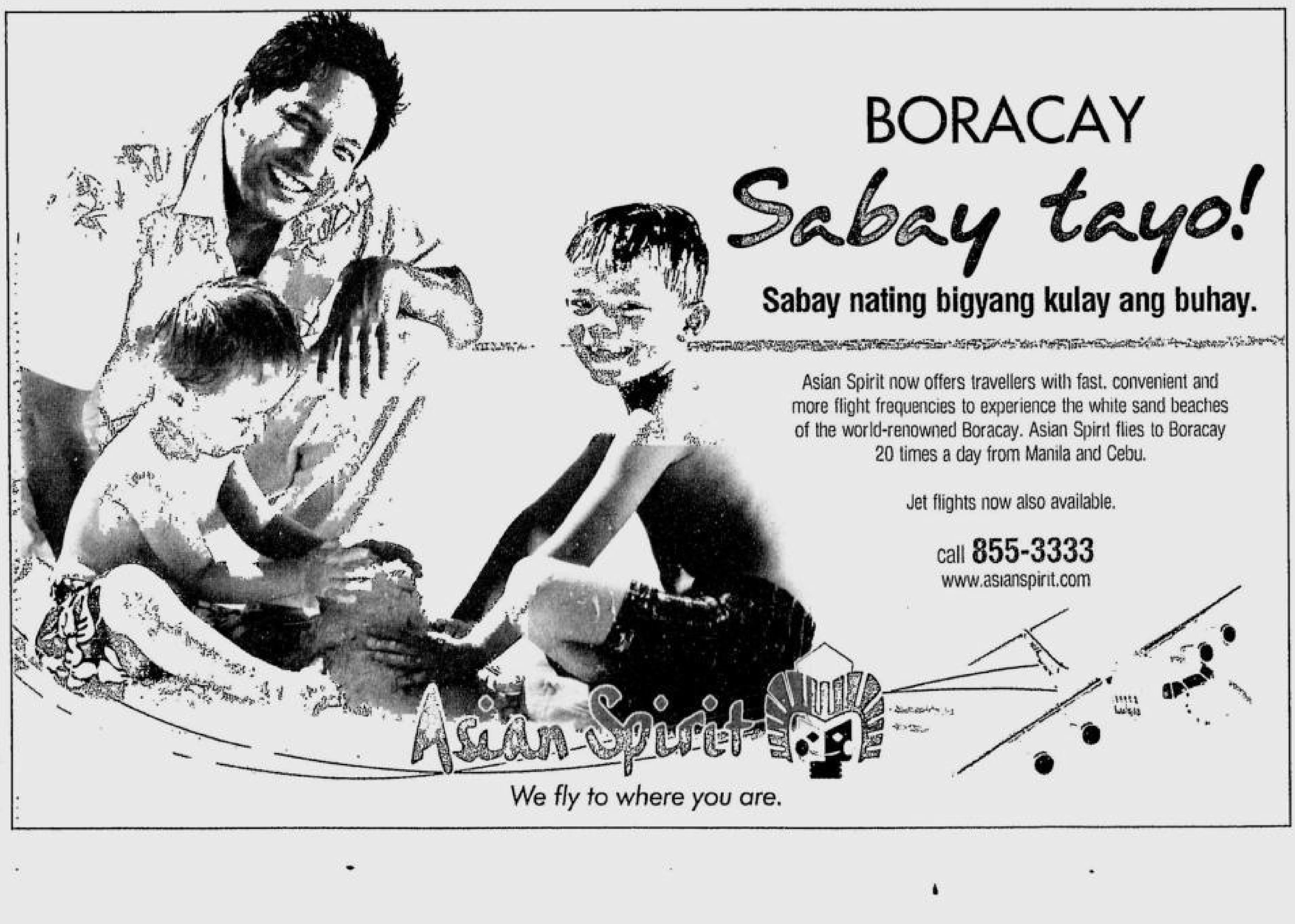
WORLDBRIEFS

New gene linked to Alzheimer's identified

WASHINGTON—Scientists said on Sunday they have pinpointed a new gene linked to Alzheimer's disease, the incurable brain disorder that is the top cause of dementia in the elderly. Abnormalities in a gene called SORL1 increased the risk for the disease, and this finding could help scientists develop new treatments, the researchers reported in the journal Nature Genetics. The researchers looked at DNA samples from 6,000 people from four ethnic groups: Caribbean-Hispanics, North Europeans, black Americans and Israeli-Arabs. They found certain variations of SORL1 more often in people with late-onset Alzheimer's disease than in healthy people. The late-onset form, affecting people age 65 and up, represents about 90 percent of Alzheimer's cases. The rarer early-onset form affects people from about age 30 to 65. Only one other gene, called ApoE4, has been identified as a risk factor for late-onset Alzheimer's. *Reuters*

Prince's girlfriend puts paparazzi under the lens

LONDON—Paparazzi trailing Kate Middleton, the girlfriend of Britain's Prince William, are under the lens after her lawyers secretly filmed the photographers as evidence for a possible complaint, The Daily Telegraph reported on Monday. The lawyers for Middleton, 25, have written to the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) after filming incidents outside her home and office, and when she arrived at and left nightclubs both with and without the prince, according to the newspaper. "The intrusion into my client's private life and the harassment that she has suffered are now amply evidenced by the events of the past seven days," read the letter from Middleton's lawyer, a copy of which was obtained by newspaper. *AFP*



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SPORTS

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Forty athletes to train, 20 to vie in Beijing

By June Navarro

AT LEAST 40 ATHLETES WILL BE TAPPED to train in the country's quest for an Olympic gold medal but only half of them is expected to make it to the Beijing Games next year.

Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez yesterday said the athletes will have to perform well in tough Olympic qualifying tournaments overseas in order to make it to the roster of Team Philippines in Beijing.

"The level of competition in the qualifying tournaments is high, so we don't expect all of them to qualify (for the Olympics)," said Ramirez. "Perhaps only 20 or fewer will make it."

The 40 athletes will come from 14 elite sports, including boxing and taekwondo where the Philippines hopes to finally land the elusive gold.

The Philippine Olympic Committee and the PSC have also picked archery, track and field, swimming, diving, gymnastics, weightlifting, lawn tennis, shooting, fencing, rowing, beach volleyball and wushu—a special event in the 2008 Beijing Olympiad—as priority sports.

Ramirez said that among the Olympic hopefuls, four Filipino-American athletes from tennis and beach volleyball are expected to make it to the team.

Tennis players Cecil Mamiit and Eric Taino are considered shoo-ins for Team Philippines together with beach volleybelles Diane Pascua and Heidi Ilustre.

"The rest will have to go through the qualifying, with some of them entering the Olympics as wild-card entries," said Ramirez, who is set to release the names of the elite athletes this week.

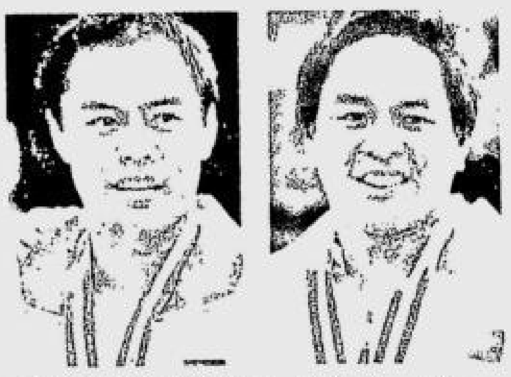
The PSC top honcho said that Pascua and Ilustre still need to reach a certain number of international games in order to make the Olympic team.

Set to compete in a tournament in New Zealand within the year, Pascua and Ilustre will definitely make the grade, Ramirez said.

Mamiit and Taino are currently in the top 64 of the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) doubles rankings, making them a cinch for Olympic berths.

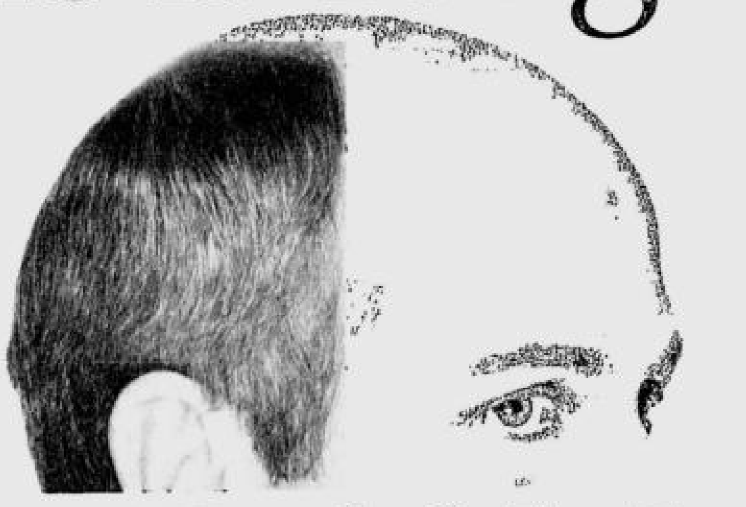
Mamiit copped the bronze medal in men's singles at the 15th Doha Asian Games last month and partnered Taino to the doubles bronze.

Ilustre and Pascua reached the Asiad quarterfinals after nailing the bronze in the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games.



OLYMPIC SHOO-INS: Mamiit (left) and Taino

Life is Tougher



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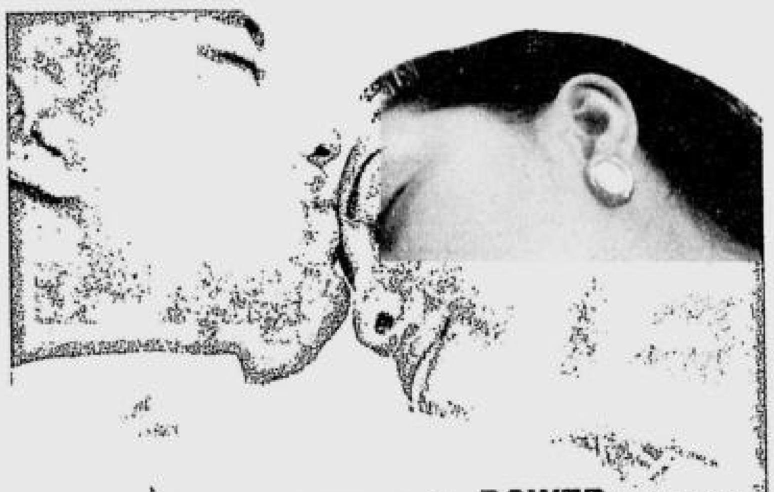

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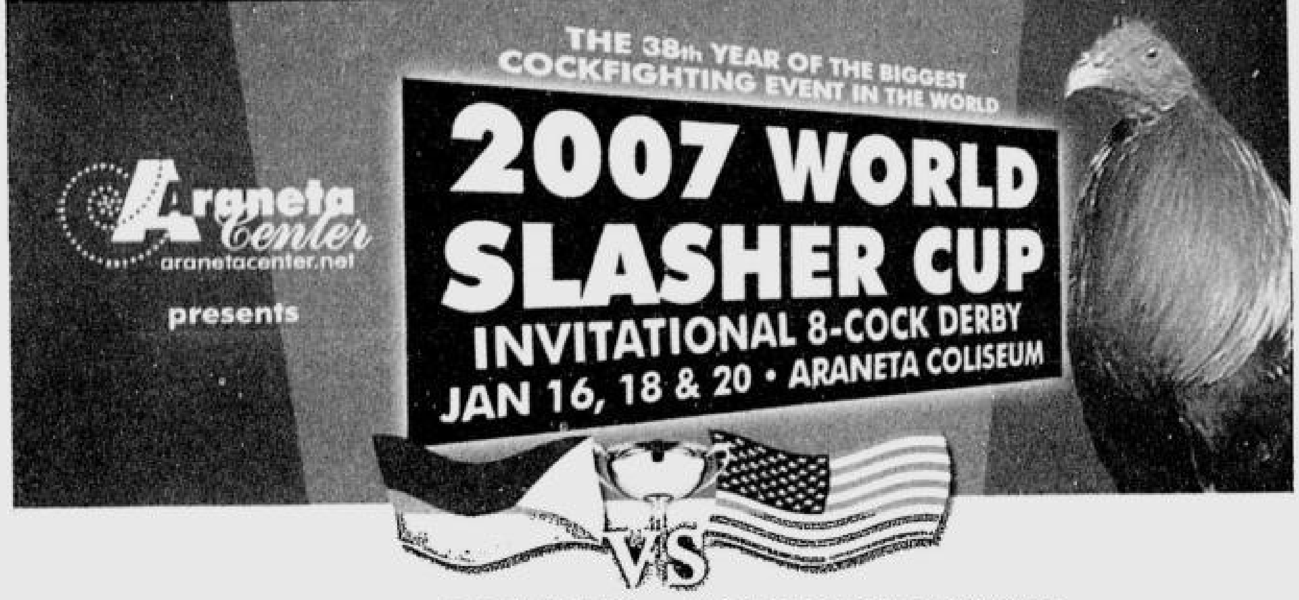

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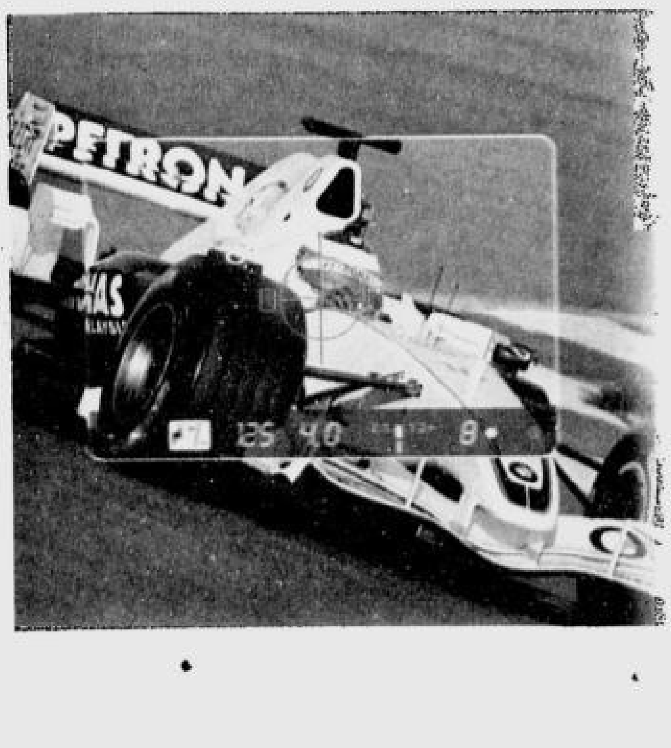

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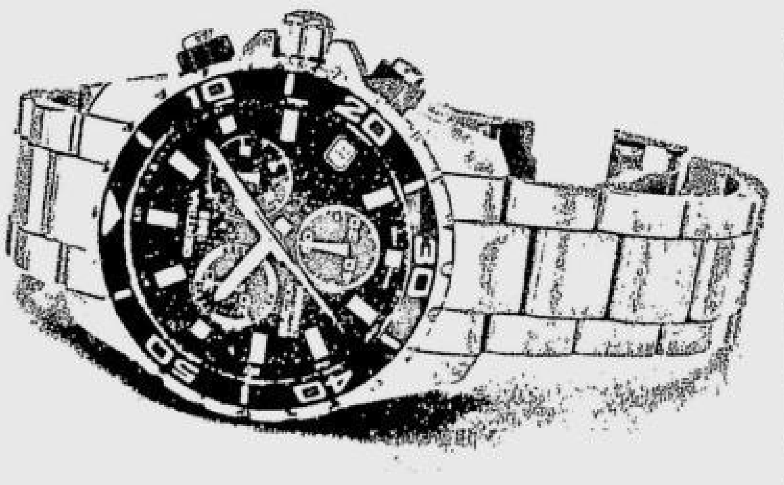

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Chess tower of power elevated to PSA Hall of Fame

THE MAN CONSIDERED AS THE PILLAR of Philippine chess for four decades gets his own hallowed place in the Hall of Fame of the Philippine Sportswriters Association.

The country's oldest media organization will elevate the highly esteemed Eugene Torre, Asia's first grandmaster, to the Hall of Fame during the SMC-PSA Annual Awards on Jan. 18 at the Entertainment Hall of the SM Mall of Asia.

The 53-year-old Torre joins an elite list of sports greats honored with the same accolade, among them golfers Ben Arda and Celestino Tugot, tracksters Lydia de Vega-Mercado and Mona Sulaiman and basketball stars Lauro Mumar and Caloy Loyzaga.

The Filipino grandmaster is one of the 68 awardees to be honored in the special two-hour program, starting at 3 p.m., that will showcase the best and brightest in local sports last year.

Boxing icon Manny Pacquiao leads seven other recipients of the Athletes of the Year award.

EUGENE TORRE: Breaking records

Guest of honor in the affair to be telecast on a delayed basis by NBN-4, but will be covered live by DZSR Sports Radio, is Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco. Providing an inspirational speech is San Miguel Corp. chief operating officer and president Ramon S. Ang.

Philippine Basketball League commissioner Chino Trinidad and perennial Southeast Asian Games karate gold medalist Gretchen Malalad are hosts of the afternoon rites sponsored by San Miguel Corp., SM Mall of Asia, Philippine Sports Commission, POC, Philippine Basketball Association, PBL, Welcoat Paints of owners Terry Que and Raymund Yu, Mikee Romero's Harbour Centre, Teletech, sportsman Hermie Esguerra, Air21, NBN-4 and DZSR Sports Radio.

Top bands The Dawn Mojofly, Rocksteddy, Join the Club, Dream Kitchen and Pancake 80 are to perform during a post-event party under the direction of leading concert organizer Sazi Cosino.

Those who will be unable to receive their invitations may get it at the awards venue.

Ever since gaining the GM title in 1974, during the World Chess Olympiad in Nice, France, Torre has valiantly carried RP chess on his shoulders.

From 1970 to 2006, the former business administration undergraduate from Mapua donned the national colors 19 consecutive times in the World Chess Olympiad—a world record, one better than the 18 held by Paul Westerinen of Finland.

During that 36-year stretch, Torre assumed Board 1 chores 17 times—also a world record—and yielded it only twice, during the 1970 edition in Siegen, Germany, and last year in Turin, Italy.

A close friend of former world champion Bobby Fischer, Torre earned a spot in the World Candidates Championships, but lost to Zoltan Ribli of Hungary in their 1983 quarterfinals match up.

In 1988, Torre captained the Philippine team to its best-ever seventh-place finish in the Chess Olympiad in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The complete list of awardees

ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

Manny Pacquiao, Violito Payla, Ronnie Alcano, Joan Tipon, Biboy Rivera, Antonio Gabica, Efren "Bata" Reyes, Rene Catalan

MAJOR AWARDS

James Yap (pro basketball); Ken Bono (amateur basketball); Juvic Pagunsan (golf); Santy Barnachea (cycling); JB Hernandez (horseracing); Real Spicy (horseracing)

PSA PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Leo Oracion, Pastor Emata, Romy Garduche

ANTONIO SIDDAYAO AWARD

Dottie Ardina, Cyna Rodriguez, Mia Legaspi, Wesley So

CITATIONS—Marie Antoinette Rivero, Tshomlee Go, Maria Mama Pabillore, Eduard Folayang, Jeffrey de Luna, Cecil Mamilt, Eric Taino, Kathleen Allora, Veronica Domingo, Manuel Rivero Jr., Godfrey Castro, Genebert Basadre, Michael Bibat, Noel Espinosa, Ramon S. Ang-SMC, Debbie de Villa, Ryan Mendoza, Francisco Bustamante, AF3, Wushu team, Erlina Pecante, Mateo Guidicelli, Dragon Boat team, Yen Makabenta, Juanito Mingarine, Philippine Football Federation, Sports Radio, Masco, Amaya Paz

SPECIAL AWARD

Recah Trinidad and Anvil Publishing

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Florencio Campomanes

MOST OUTSTANDING NSAs

Billiards, Boxing

Henkel guns for s'finals sans coach

IS HENKEL SISTA STRONG enough to overcome a big missing element in a a crucial game?

STANDINGS	W	L
Mail N More	7	3
Henkel Sista	6	3
Hapee	6	3
Toyota Otis	6	3
Harbour	6	3
TeleTech	4	5
Pera Padala	4	5
Magnolia	2	7
Kettle Korn	0	9

GAMES TODAY
(*Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym*)
2 p.m.—Henkel Sista vs Magnolia
4 p.m.—Toyota Otis vs TeleTech

The Super Sealers vie for a semifinal slot in their final elimination match in the PBL Silver Cup today without head coach Caloy Garcia.

Garcia will serve a one-game suspension for "conduct unbecoming" in recent games.

The Super Sealers, locked in a four-way tie at 6-3, battle the Magnolia Spinners at 2 p.m. at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym.

Henkel Sista and Toyota Otis—which will tackle TeleTech at 4 p.m.—along with idle teams Hapee-PCU and Harbour Centre must win their final games to stay in the running for an outright semifinal berth.

Mail and More missed the chance to nail the first semifinal seat, but secured at least a playoff slot after ending its elimination campaign with a 7-3 record.

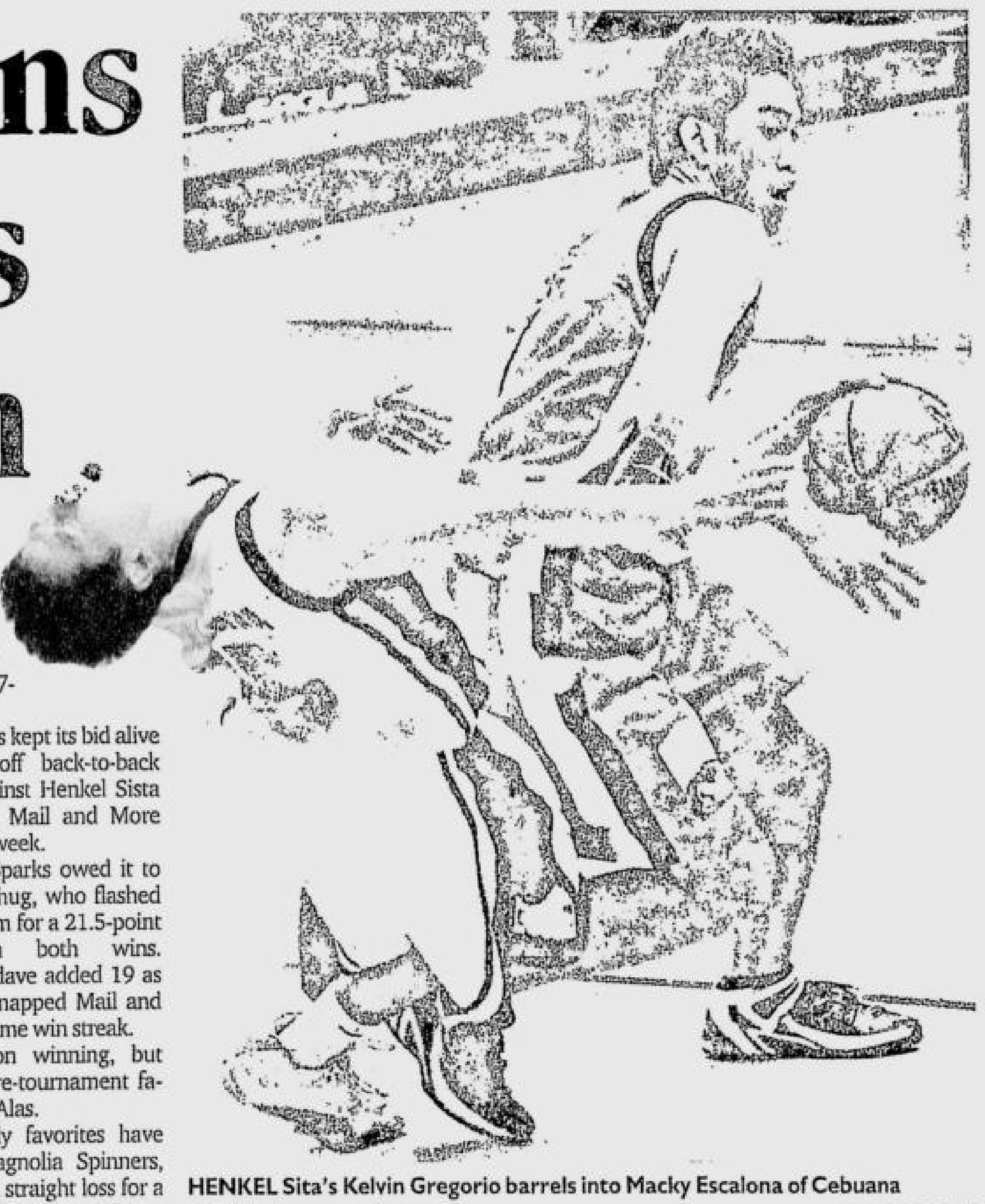
Toyota Otis kept its bid alive by pulling off back-to-back stunners against Henkel Sista (82-66) and Mail and More (81-71) last week.

And the Sparks owed it to Patrick Cabahug, who flashed his sharp form for a 21.5-point average in both wins. Jonathan Aldave added 19 as the Sparks snapped Mail and More's six-game win streak.

"We have to keep on winning, but TeleTech is among the pre-tournament favorites," said coach Louie Alas.

But none of the early favorites have shone, including the Magnolia Spinners, who skidded to their third straight loss for a 2-7 slate.

Jasmine W. Payo


HENKEL Sita's Kelvin Gregorio barrels into Macky Escalona of Cebuana Lhuillier in a recent game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Dimakiling wins anew, catches So in 2nd spot

Standings after 6 rounds:

5.5 pts—GM Le Quang Liem (Vie); 4.5—IM Wesley So (RP), IM Oliver Dimakiling (RP); 4.0—GM Nelson Mariano (RP), NM Oliver Barbosa (RP), NM Nouri Hamed (RP), GM Tu Hoang Thong (Vie), IM Vui Vinh (Vie), FM Batchuluun Cegmed (Mya); 3.5—GM Rogelio Antonio Jr. (RP), IM Ronald Dableo (RP), IM Darwin Laylo (RP), GM Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son (Vie), GM Dao Thien Hai (Vie), GM Nguyen Anh Dung (Vie), FM Pham Chuong (Vie), FM Duong The Anh (Vie), Nguyen Van Huy (Vie), IM Wynn Zwa Htun (Mya), Gundavaa Bayarsaihan (Mya); 3.0—GM Mark Paragua (RP), GM Eugene Torre (RP).

FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL MASTER OLIVER Dimakiling continued his climb in the 2007 Asian Zonal Chess Championship Sunday night, beating Vietnamese Grandmaster Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son in the sixth round for his third straight win in the tournament being held in Phu Quoc, Kien Giang, Vietnam.

The 27-year-old from Davao City prevailed with the white pieces in 51 moves of a Trompovsky against Son, a five-gold winner in the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games, to catch up with compatriot IM Wesley So in second spot.

Dimakiling and So, who settled for his second straight draw with Vietnamese IM Bui Vinh, tote 4.5 points each, a full point behind solo leader GM Quang Liem of Vietnam.

Liem leapt to 5.5 points after downing Filipino IM Darwin Laylo in 70 moves of a Slav Defense.

Dimakiling also bested Nguyen Huynh Minh Huy and Pham Chuong to make up for his loss to GM Eugene Torre in the third round.

Dimakiling will have Le as his seventh round opponent Tuesday. Monday is rest day.

The 13-year-old So, winner of three of his first four matches, will next face GM Nelson Mariano II, who drew with NM Nouri Hamed, the best Filipino performer in last year's PGMA Cup.

In other featured sixth-round matches, NM Oliver Barbosa drew with Viet GM Tu Hoang Thong, GM Rogelio Antonio drew with Myanmar's Gundavaa Bayarsaihan while IM Ronald Dableo drew with IM Wynn Zaw Htun of Myanmar.

Filipino GMs Mark Paragua won over Vietnam's Tran Ngoc Lan while Torre yielded to Beg Cegmed.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

PBA shortens tilt, renews support for RP five

By Musong R. Castillo

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
4:35 p.m.—Purefoods vs Talk 'N Text
7:20 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Red Bull

REAFFIRMING ITS COMMITMENT TO HELP THE country return to the international basketball scene, the PBA yesterday agreed to "sacrifice" some more for the benefit of the sport.

The current power struggle in local basketball notwithstanding, the league yesterday announced that it would shorten the second conference to make an All-Star team available for the Philippines' participation, possibly in the Fiba-Asia tournament in July.

"The PBA is reaffirming its commitment to support the national team's cause," said league commissioner Noli Eala after a meeting with the league's board last night. "Even if it means the ultimate sacrifice on our part, like the teams' exposures (being) affected and our projected revenues disrupted, the entire PBA believes this is something we have to do."

The board also reiterated its pledge to support the unification efforts of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas, which is trying to get recognition from the Philippine Olympic Committee before applying as a bona fide member of the international federation (Fiba).

"The PBA would like to show an example to the entire basketball community that we have to make concrete sacrifices, not just lip service," Eala said, adding that the second conference, which opens in March, will be shortened.

From an eight-game-per-week schedule, the tournament will play nine and the wild-card phase will be reduced from a single round to three knockout games.

"Hopefully, this will give the RP team more time to prepare and hone up," Eala added.

Teeners donning RP colors in Thailand SEAG badminton

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE BADMINTON IS SET to undergo an extreme makeover this year.

Young players no older than 17 years old will be tapped to represent the country in international competitions, staring with the Thailand Southeast Asian Games in December.

"Our thrust is to make changes," national head coach Errol Chan told the INQUIRER yesterday. "It's time we gave fresh faces a chance, we need changes to achieve our goals."

Room for experience

Fielding young players in overseas tournaments has its advantages, according to Chan, the former grassroots development chief of the Philippine Badminton Association.

For one, he said, young shuttlers are willing to undergo extended training abroad.

"They also have in their hands plenty of room for exposure and experience," Chan added. "These kids are not yet afraid of the Malaysian and Indonesians, and when you expose them to world-class competitions, there is a strong chance they won't be scared by them at all."

The badminton association has disbanded the national team with its 20-plus members relegated to the training pool.

Sources of livelihood

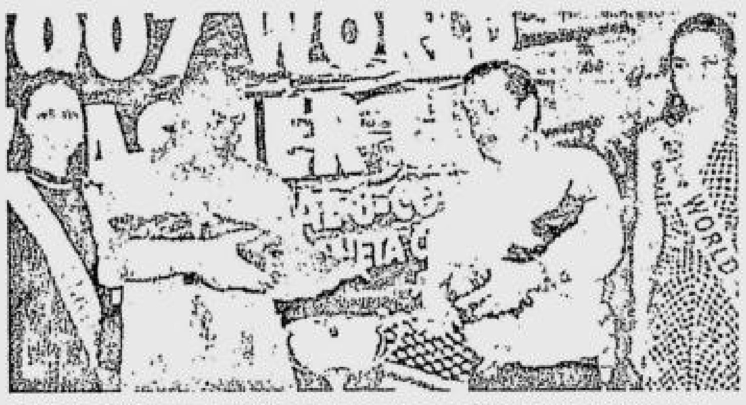
"You can't take these players out of the team easily because some of them don't have other sources of livelihood," Chan said. "They only get P4,000 a month in allowances from the Philippine Sports Commission, which is too little in itself."

For the Thailand SEAG, Chan hopes to get enough private support to enroll players in a three-month training camp in China.

He said that with enough international exposure, Filipino players can stand on equal footing with the Malaysians and Indonesians, who are considered to be among the world's finest shuttlecock artists.

"Even if they lose, it's easier to accept young players losing this early in their career than see players who have been there for eight to 10 years and still losing to the same opponents," he said.

SPORTSWATCH


CALIFORNIA breeder Mike Formosa (second from left) and reigning World Slasher champion Dicky Lim show their prized birds during the press launch of the 2007 World Slasher Cup Invitational 8-Cock Derby.

World Slasher draws 136 top breeders

THE 2007 WORLD SLASHER INVITATIONAL 8-COCK DERBY HAS LURED 136 entries and is expected to be the toughest ever in the event's 38-year history, according to organizers. The year's World Slasher Cup will be held on Jan. 16, 18 and 20 at the Araneta Coliseum. The foreign cockers and breeders include 2001 champion Roger Roberts of Georgia, Ray Alexander of Alabama, Mike Formosa of Hawaii, Joe Stanfield of California, Speedy Gonzales of California, Jessie Sevilla of Florida, Roy Miñoza and Ric Cabullos of Canada, Vic Diez of Guam, Noriaki Morita of Japan, and Thomas Mishkosh of Germany.

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Swiss Alps (7), Ahnone (6), Lady Thunder/La Truena (2), Thor Azura (4)
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Sharp Cookie (2), Angie Gray (4), Rebecca's Magic (6), Spanish Drums (1), Coeur D'Honneur (9)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Gentleman's Lady (5), Vinta's Pride (2), Golden Sinica (4), Wing-Away (7), Ravensworth (1)
Race 4—(Kambro (1), Ocean Cookie (12), Shifty (10), Mulligan (4), Gonfalon Story (5), Southern Prince (6)
Race 5—(Red Phoenix (5), Rho Sig (2), Summit Force (6), Vingghet (4), Reign of D'Jungle (9)
Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Strong Jays (7), Calvin's Magic (2), Bronte (10), Coat of Arms (5), Golden Touch (4)
Race 7—Qrt/Tri—Silver Eagle/Firehouse (8), Sandok (2), Beautiful Jaeda (3), Petro Dollar (5)
Race 8—Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Dixie Dash (10), Red Diamond (11), House of Riches (6), Chabacana (7), Concorde (8), Naida's Star (9)

Arroyo entries 1-2 in NCA World Championship derby

THE FIGHT BIRDS OF REP. IGGY ARroyo won both the championship and runner-up honors in the recent National Cockers' Association (NCA) World Championship derby at the Pasay City Cockpit.

Arroyo's entry JP Cherokee Red Creek I bagged the championship with a perfect 7 points, while his second entry Cherokee Red Creek II took second place with 6.5 points.

The derby, held Jan. 9, 11, and 13, featured the world's finest cockers and is considered by top American breeders as the toughest in the world.

Americans Joe Wolcott and Larry Whitehead settled for third place with 6 points, in a tie with Eric dela Rosa, Ricky Valencia and Gerry Ramos.

Patrick Antonio came next with 5.5 points, followed by the combined entry of Wolcott and Whitehead with 5.

Antonio Villar, Tomas Joson, Ito Ynares, Rep. Rudy Albano, Boy Marso, and Antonio's second entry also garnered 5 points in the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000.

Boy Jiao and George Antonio came next with 4.5 points each, followed by Eric Dela Rosa, Tony Oppen, Rey Briones, Sen. Bong Revilla and Manny Pacquiao with 4 apiece.

107 entries vying in SJC int'l cockfest

ONE-HUNDRED-SEVEN ENTRIES HAVE ALREADY CONFIRMED PARTICIPAtion in the SJC 8-Cock International Derby slated Jan. 22, 24 and 26 at the San Juan Coliseum. Pit manager Pete Rivera said they would only accommodate 120 entries and that prospective participants should inform the SJC management of their intention by Saturday. A guaranteed prize of P6 million is at stake in the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. "This event has become a breeders' choice because of its format, where each participant automatically becomes a co-host," said host and SJC owner Rodolfo Pineda.

Roligon anniversary event starts Jan. 30

ROLIGON MEGA COCKPIT IN PARAÑAQUE CITY IS GEARING UP FOR THE much-awaited RMC 17th Anniversary 6-Cock Derby which kicks off on Jan. 30, Feb. 1, 3, 5 and 7. Keenly awaited by cockers and gamefowl breeders every year, the derby dangles a guaranteed prize of P4 million. Entry fee is only P11,000, said host Rolly Ligon. Participants who will score two points in the 2-cock elimination rounds on Jan. 30 and Feb. 1 and 3 will share in the P100,000 day prize. Semifinal and final rounds unfold on Feb. 5 and Feb. 7, respectively. The fastest-win champion, based on the last two fights in the championship round, will recieve P500,000 while his handler gets P100,000.

Goydos' smile returns with Sony Open title

HONOLULU—NICKNAMED "SUNshine" on the PGA Tour because of his stone-faced demeanor, American Paul Goydos had plenty to smile about after winning the Sony Open by a shot on Sunday.

The 42-year-old Californian clinched his second title on the world's most lucrative circuit more than a decade and 256 tournaments after claiming his maiden victory.

"This is a pretty big deal and it probably will sink in later on," a beaming Goydos told reporters after closing with a three-under-par 67 on another breezy day at Waialae Country Club.

"What excites me is testing myself, going out and playing the game. Especially on this golf course which is very challenging, you have a lot of different things you have to do out here.

"It's all about perseverance. This is my job. This is what I do.

"Our goals are to go out and do your work and play the best golf that you can. But you do have to get some good things happen in order to win and today I definitely had some good things happen." Goydos, whose breakthrough victory came at the 1996 Bay Hill Invitational, had no explanation for what suddenly clicked in his game at the second event of the 2007 PGA Tour.

"I haven't played well and I've got myself in a chance to play well and I haven't finished," he said after overhauling third-round leader Charles Howell III and Britain's Luke Donald with three birdies in the last four holes.

"I think I read in the paper I have had five or six 36-hole leads in my career and that surprised me.

"It just hasn't happened. Maybe I'm going to win five of my next 10 starts and all of a sudden that evens out.

"Maybe that's the way it's going to work out, I don't know.

But you know, we're going to just keep grinding, keep trying to get better and that's really your ultimate goal."

Had it not been for his strong performance in the final full-field event of last year's PGA Tour, Goydos may not have been eligible for Waialae this week.

He avoided a fourth trip to the Tour's qualifying school by tying for second at the Chrysler Championship in Tampa last October, vaulting from 160th to 97th in the money list to earn fully-exempt status for this season.

Goydos felt his ability to stay focused as the leaderboard fluctuated over the closing stretch had played an important part in his victory.

"Emotionally, I guess maybe that's why I was able to be successful today is that there weren't any (emotions) per se," said the American, who earned a two-year PGA Tour exemption with his win. *Reuters*

PAUL GOYDOS: 10-year drought ends. AFP

Badminton embarks on super tour

KUALA LUMPUR—OFFICIALS ARE HOPING this week's Malaysia Open will launch a new era in badminton as it embarks on an ambitious campaign to become the world's premier racquet sport.

Starting on Tuesday, the tournament is the first of 12 super series events being introduced this year as part of a revamped world tour.

It is set for an explosive opening with a revenge clash between Asian Games finalists Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia and China's Lin Dan in the first round.

Punch Gunalan, deputy president of Badminton World Federation (BWF), said he was confident the Malaysian event would provide the new tour with a solid platform on which to grow.

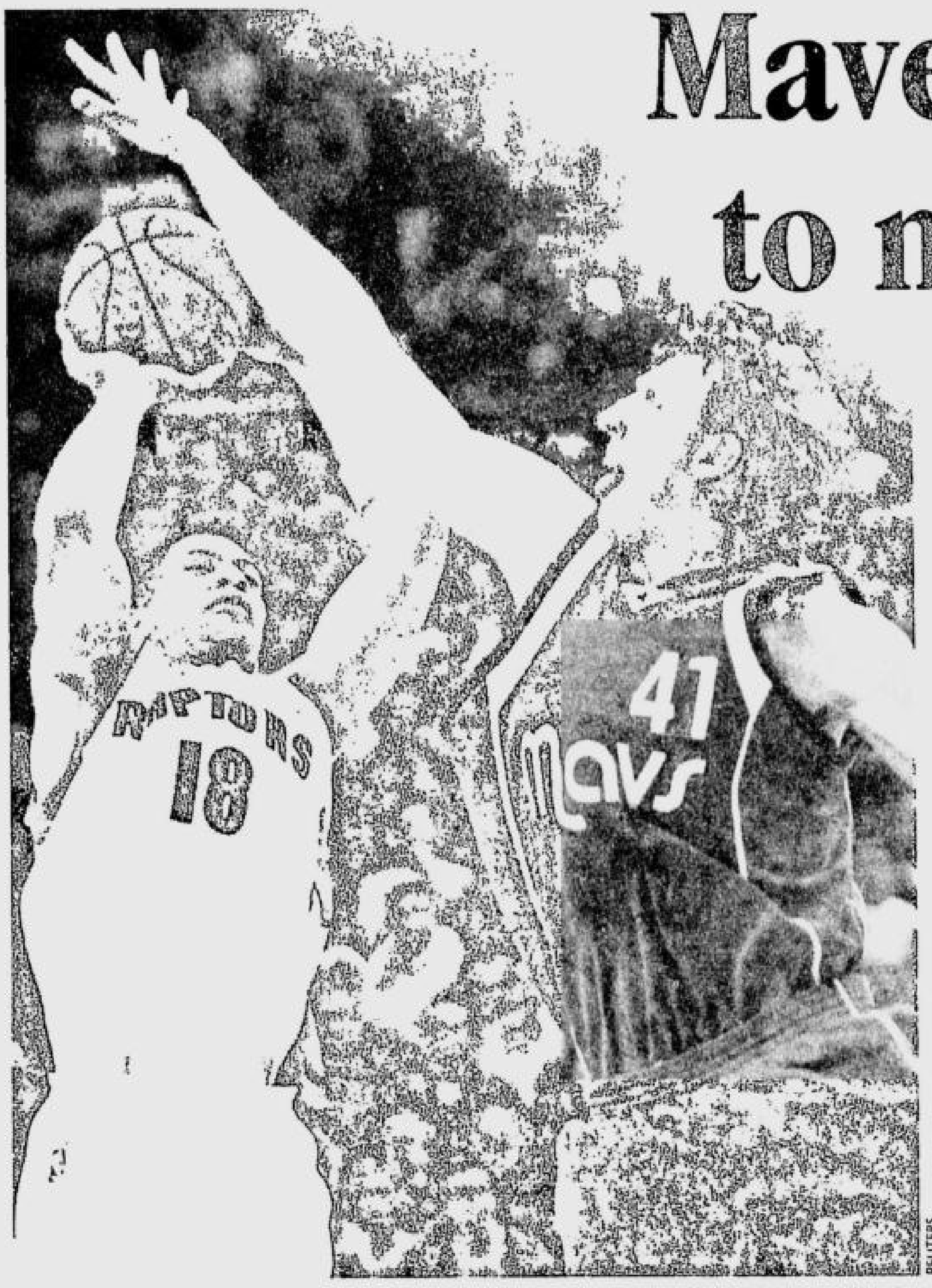
"Whenever you start something new, you keep your fingers cross that there won't be any problems," Gunalan told Reuters on Monday.

"We want to see what mistakes we may make and correct them quickly. BWF is excited because we hope this is the first step to make badminton the best racquet sport in the world."

The super series offers more prize money, with each tournament putting up a purse of at least $200.000, more television coverage and a chance for players to earn a living from the sport.

BWF is also trying to move the emphasis away from teams and focus more on individuals. This is reflected in the draw with world number one Lin looking for revenge over Asian Games gold medalist and 12th-ranked Taufik. *Reuters*

Mavericks rally to nip Raptors



REUTERS

THE RAPTORS' Anthony Parker puts up a shot against the Mavericks' Dirk Nowitzki (right).

TORONTO—JOSH HOWARD SANK A LAY-UP WITH LESS THAN A second remaining to complete the Dallas Mavericks' 97-96 come-from-behind victory over the Toronto Raptors on Sunday.

The Raptors led by as many as 16 points at one stage but the Mavericks fought back behind the hot shooting of Dirk Nowitzki to win for the 17th time in 18 games.

Nowitzki finished with 38 points.

Howard was left unguarded in the final seconds as the Raptors double-teamed Nowitzki and the forward took advantage to stand under the basket and take Jason Terry's pass before slipping in the game-winning shot.

Toronto's Anthony Parker missed a three-point attempt at the buzzer to hand the Mavericks (31-8) their fourth straight win.

Nowitzki led the rally for the Mavericks, shooting 14-for-30, hauling down 11 rebounds with five assists, three blocks and two steals.

"We didn't get going until the second quarter and made it a game after a terrible start.

"Josh was open and made a hell of a finish."

Toronto led for most of the game, including 59-48 at the half, but the Marvericks rallied to take the lead with two minutes left and then again on Howard's late shot.

It was a frustrating loss for the Raptors (17-21), who shot 49 percent from the field and made 21 of their 24 free throws.

The defeat left them tied for first place in the weak Atlantic Division with the New Jersey Nets.

Terry added 17 points for Dallas, while Howard added 14 points and had eight rebounds.

Chris Bosh had 24 points and 15 rebounds for the Raptors, while T.J. Ford added 16 points and eight assists and Parker chipped in with 14 points.

Allen Iverson scored 32 points and had nine assists as the Denver Nuggets won for just the second time in their past nine games, downing the Portland Trail Blazers, 109-93.

Steve Blake added 25 points for the Nuggets (18-17), who are just 5-8 without leading scorer Carmelo Anthony, who was suspended for 15 games. *Reuters*

NBA ON BASKETBALL TV
Game Today
(January 16, 2007, Tuesday)
11 a.m.—Miami vs. LA Lakers (replays @ 4 p.m. & 9:30 p.m.)

Police eject 150 rowdy spectators

MELBOURNE—POLICE EJECTED ABOUT 150 spectators from the Australian Open Monday after an ugly brawl broke out between Serbian and Croatian fans inside the ground.

Fans wearing the national colors of the bitter Balkan rivals clashed in the Rod Laver Arena after taunting and hurling insults at each other.

Witnesses said they kicked and punched each other, setting upon their rivals with flagpoles, bottles and chairs before dozens of police and security staff ended the melee then ejected the combatants after confiscating their tickets.

"They were mostly Serbians ejected as they were upsetting the Croatians," Victoria state police spokeswoman Katherine Jess said.

Earlier, a group of fans gathered in central Melbourne and lit flares as they made their way to the stadium.

"It's bad because you go to the tennis and you go to watch and then it ends up in an actual brawl, it's just ridiculous," a Croatian fan called Marina told Australian Associated Press. "You go to cheer on your actual player, not to go and fight."

But a Serbian fan claimed: "The Croats started kicking and punching us. It's unfair they get to stay and we have to go." Tennis Australia chief executive Steve Wood said there were no arrests or reports of injuries and noted security staff acted swiftly to end the fight. *AFP*

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Federer, Roddick hurdle rivals

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—ROGER Federer made it look difficult for a change, starting his bid for a 10th Grand Slam championship and successful Australian Open title defense by dropping serve three times in the first set.

But the top-ranked Federer rebounded quickly after Bjorn Phau took a 5-3 lead Monday, winning the next nine games—conceding only six points in the second set.

The Swiss star went on to win 7-5, 6-0, 6-4, easily dispatching the 27-year-old German who beat him seven years ago in their only previous match.

"I got broken in the first set three times—you try to stay cool but I got a little bit nervous," said Federer, who went 92-5 with 12 titles last season and has held the top ranking since February 2004.

Otherwise, he said, "It felt great to be back."

Federer changed his preparation schedule this year, skipping his usual regular-season opener and playing three matches in an exhibition tournament at Kooyong, where he lost the final Saturday to Andy Roddick.

Federer said he had overcome any Grand Slam nerves, though it would take a little time to get his best rhythm back.

"Now that I'm through my first round, you obviously kind of shake it off and you feel good about it," said Federer, who will break Jimmy Connors' record of 160 consecutive weeks atop the men's rankings at the end of next month.

FEDERER

VAIDISOVA

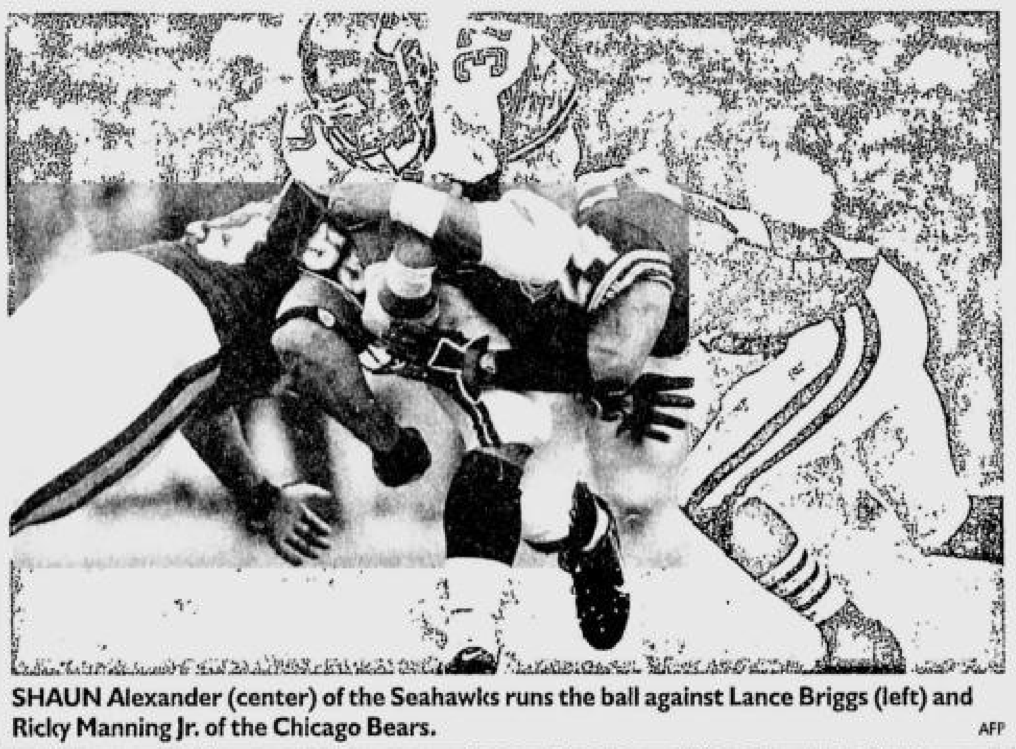
Marcos Baghdatis, the surprise finalist here last year, opened with a 6-4, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 win over 2003 runner-up Rainer Schuettler in the match following Federer, drawing wild cheers from the big gathering of Cypriots and Greeks in the crowd.

Roddick overcame a shaky start against French wild-card Jo-Wilfred Tsonga, wasting four set points in the opening tiebreaker and rallying from 2-5 in the second set to win 6-7 (18), 7-6 (2), 6-3, 6-3.

Women's champion Amelie Mauresmo was first up on Rod Laver Arena and started her title defense with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Shenay Perry.

Seventh-seeded Elena Dementieva of Russia advanced with a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Stephanie Foretz of France.

French Open semifinalist Nicole Vaidisova, seeded 10th, beat American Jill Craybas6-4, 5-7, 6-1, and 11th-seeded Jelena Jankovic continued her successful start to the year with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Canada's Aleksandra Wozniak. *AP*



SHAUN Alexander (center) of the Seahawks runs the ball against Lance Briggs (left) and Ricky Manning Jr. of the Chicago Bears. AFP

Bears, Patriots gain playoffs

CHICAGO—ROBBIE GOULD kicked a 49-yard field goal after four minutes and 58 seconds of overtime here Sunday to give the Chicago Bears a 27-24 victory over Seattle in the National Football League playoffs.

The second-round triumph, Chicago's first playoff victory since the 1994 season, lifted the Bears into next Sunday's National Conference final here against New Orleans, with the winner advancing to next month's Super Bowl.

While the Bears managed to hold on for their victory, San Diego couldn't do the same, the top-seeded Chargers falling to the New England Patriots 24-21 in an American Conference clash.

The Patriots, winners of three of the past five Super Bowls, will face Indianapolis next Sunday for a spot in the Feb. 4 championship spectacle in Miami.

Gould's kick, matching the longest field goal of his career, snapped a three-game home playoff losing streak for the Bears.

"As a kicker, you want these opportunities," Gould said. "Just got to take advantage of the opportunity that you get and mentally focus."

Gould had tied the game with a 41-yard field goal that snuck just inside the left upright with 4:24 left in regulation.

Much of the attention before the game focused on Bears quarterback Rex Grossman, who caused plenty of angst in Chicago due to his propensity to commit turnovers.

During the regular season, Grossman was intercepted 20 times and lost five fumbles. But he also threw for 3,193 yards and 23 touchdowns.

On Sunday Grossman had two turnovers—one interception and a fumble. He also passed for 282 yards, including a 68-yard touchdown to Bernard Berrian in the second quarter.

In San Diego, coach Marty Schottenheimer saw his team's superb 14-3 season come to a familiar end.

Making the defeat particularly bitter was that the Chargers surrendered a 21-13 fourth-quarter lead and were especially hurt by a wide receiver they no longer wanted.

Reche Caldwell, who signed as a free agent with the Patriots after spending four seasons with the Chargers, caught a touchdown pass and made a key 49-yard reception before rookie Stephen Gostkowski kicked a 31-yard field goal with 1:10 left in the fourth quarter. *AFP*

SPORTS

SBP sets basketball 'unity congress' on Feb. 5

PANGILINAN

TAKING THE FIRST BIG STEP TOWARD RECONCILIATION, the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) will hold a unity congress on Feb. 5 at Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati.

Registration starts at 10 a.m.

Congress organizers said the SBP will send out invitations to "all bona fide members of the Basketball Association of the Philippines and Pilipinas Basketball."

Acting SBP corporate secretary Marievic Ramos-Añonuevo said the congress will hear the report of the three-man panel recognizing BAP and PB, as well as oversee the conduct of the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, among other things.

The three-man panel led by businessman-sportsman Manny V. Pangilinan, owner of the PBA's Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, is trying to reach out to all members of the basketball community to speed up the country's return to the international scene after a two-year absence.

The country is still under suspension by the international basketball federation, known as Fiba.

It was meted the punishment after the Philippine Olympic Committee expelled the BAP from the national Olympic family.

The BAP expulsion stemmed from its alleged acts inimical to the growth of basketball in the country. Certain BAP officials were also accused of bringing the national team into disrepute.

BAP officials denied the accusations.

Expected to join Pangilinan in presiding over the discussions at the congress are PB's Junjun Capistrano and former BAP president Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, who reiterated his support for the ideals and goals of SBP.

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'World Cup' boxing moved

THE "WORLD CUP" OF BOXING FEATURING fights involving Filipino challengers and Mexican world champions in Cebu has been moved from March 4 to the middle of the year to give organizers more time to negotiate with the managers of the titleholders.

In a message sent to the Cebu media yesterday, top Filipino promoter Sammy Gello-ani said that they have not reached agreement with the managers of WBO superbantamweight champ Daniel Ponce De Leon and WBO bantam king Jhonny Gonzales to fight in the Philippines.

"We have decided, together with Golden Boy Promotions, to postpone the World Cup championship boxing," Gello-ani said. "Nevertheless, we will make sure that the World Cup will still take place in the Philippines."

Both Ponce De Leon and Gonzales are said to have shown no interest in coming to the Philippines to face Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista and Gerry Peñalosa, respectively.

Ponce De Leon's camp was also quoted as saying they would only travel to the Philippines "if the money is right."

The camp of Gonzales had also been quoted as saying he would gain nothing from defending against Peñalosa in the Philippines. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

RP forward Chris Greatwich (left) eludes a diving Thai defender. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY ANDY ALVAREZ

Thais knock out RP eleven

Filipinos battle Myanmar XI today

By Cedelf P. Tupas, *Inquirer Visayas*

BANGKOK—THE PHILIPPINES' ONCE-PROMISING bid in the Asean Football Championship has turned into a nightmare here.

After cruising to three victories in qualifying in Bacolod City, the RP booters were robbed of a tested striker on Dec. 26, when Fil-Briton striker Phil Younghusband decided to skip the main tournament.

Their misfortunes continued Friday when they lost to the Malaysians, 4-0, in their first Group A match, where captain Aly Borromeo suffered a knee injury that would keep him out for the remainder of the tournament.

It was the Thais' turn to whip the Filipinos, 4-0, Sunday night, booting the nationals out of contention in the eight-nation event.

Coach Aris Caslib has something to build upon in their final match against Myanmar today, however, after the Filipinos' impressive play early in the second half against the Thais at the Suphachalasai Stadium.

The Myanmar-RP clash is set at 7 p.m. at the Army Stadium with the Filipinos out to redeem themselves from their back-to-back losses and to spoil Myanmar's bid for a semifinal berth.

In their last meeting, Myanmar nipped the RP booters, 1-0, in Malaysia two years ago.

Early chances

The RP team had gone into the match hoping to get the maximum 3 points and capitalize on the draw between Myanmar and Malaysia. But it was the hosts who signaled their intent early on with Suchao Nutnum barely missing from just outside the box after Datsakorn Thonglao's intelligent through ball on six minutes.

Two minutes later, the Filipinos went close to taking the lead when James Younghusband was brought down from 30 yards out. But Anton del Rosario, who scored from a similar distance in a 4-1 win over Brunei in the qualifiers in Bacolod, was unable to reproduce his form and his shot just sailed inches high of the Thai goal.

After a period of sustained pressure that saw Phil Greatwich getting robbed of the ball at a very dangerous area, the Thais finally got their noses in front in the 15th minute with a close-range strike from Sirayoot Chikamdee, who latched on a great ball from Sutee Sumsokit.

Pattern of dominance

The pattern of Thai dominance continued thereafter and in the 19th minute, they almost doubled the advantage against the run of play as Pipat Thonkanya's cross was parried by Michael Casas.

Emelio Caligdong shot straight into the hands of Kosin Hathairattanakul a minute later.

But Thailand was not to be denied from making it 2-0 in the 21st minute. Another brilliant through ball from Datsakorn found an onrushing Pipat, who easily beat Casas with a half-volley from 12-yards.

The goal looked to have taken the fight out of the Filipinos and another Thai foray three minutes later saw Sumsokit's shot get spilled by Casas, who recovered the ball just in time in front of a bunch of Thai players.

It was 3-0 in the 27th minute with Phonkanya providing the cross and Chikamde heading the ball.

"We lost track of our game plan after the first goal," said national coach Aris Caslib. "We were actually on equal footing with the Thais in the first 15 minutes of the match."

"But the mentality of the team is really not at par with the Thais and in the final 10 minutes, they simply overpowered us."

Junior players tipped to steal show in RP Ladies Open golf

JUNIOR PLAYERS ARE OUT TO MAKE A strong showing in the 45th staging of the ICTSI-Philippine Ladies Open starting tomorrow at The Country Club in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

At least a third of the 97 players are in their teens, headed by defending champion Debbie de Villa and Dottie Ardina, the multititled 13-year-old who is bidding to become the youngest to win the event.

The Open has had teenagers as champions in the last three years—Jayvie Agojo, Frances Bondad and De Villa.

Young standouts from the United States, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Indonesia are set to challenge the homegrown bets.

Thuhashini Selvaratnam of Sri Lanka was the last foreign winner in 2000.

Two crack Fil-Am juniors, Daffodil Sanchez and Cristina Corpus, are also seeing action.

Carmelette Villaroman will seek a second straight title at the same course where she won the RP Amateur crown three weeks ago.

The 29-year-old will also try to win back the Open trophy she first won 13 years ago.

Expected to grace today's opening rites are Ricky Razon of ICSTI, Bomboy Araneta and Earl McCarthy of TCC, DOTC Secretary and NGAP president Leandro Mendoza, PSC chair Butch Ramirez, WGAP president Gina Tuason and LPGA campaigner Jennifer Rosales.

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11-month OFW remittances hit all-time high

November inflow of $1.14B brings total to $11.44B

By Doris C. Dumlao

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS SENT HOME $11.44 billion during the first 11 months of 2006, an all-time high and 17.6-percent more than the previous year's level, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

Remittances for the month of November at $1.14 billion was 27.8-percent higher than a year ago and broke the $1-billion monthly level for the seventh straight month.

Bangko Sentral Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said there was a strong possibility that the total OFW flows for 2006, once the reports are completed, would exceed the BSP's full-year projected level of $12.3 billion.

"The strength of remittances during the 11-month period may be attributed to the continued preference for Filipino workers by host countries and improved financial services made available by banks and other nonbank remittance channels," Tetangco said.

Bulk of OFW remittances continued to pour in from the United States, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan, Canada, Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore and Taiwan.

Citing preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration on new hires and rehires, Tetangco noted that the total number of deployed Filipino workers from January to November 2006 reached 1.04 million, or 12.8-percent more than a year ago.

Classified by type of worker, the number of land-based workers increased by 13.8 percent to 786,687 while the number of sea-based workers grew by 9.8 percent to 250,447.

"It is expected that the demand for Filipino workers will continue to be strong given the country's large pool of skilled and professional human resources," Tetangco said.

"Banks, meanwhile, continued to serve as efficient and preferred channels of remittance transfer due to their introduction of innovative financial services, such as Internet/on-line banking, phone banking, bills payment arrangements, as well as their competitive service fees and conversion rates," the BSP chief added.

Tetangco said banks, private remittance companies and other formal remittance agents were focused on setting up improved infrastructure mechanisms to increase the number of remittance centers and strengthen tie-ups abroad.

"These initiatives are expected to fa-

11-MONTH/ B2

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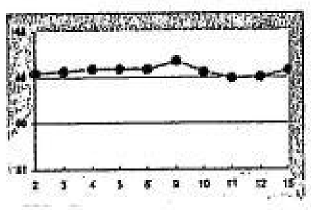

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STOCK MARKET

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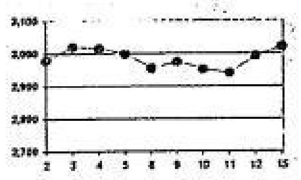

(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks up on rosier economic outlook

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.90-PERCENT higher on follow-through buying after the government announced a rosier outlook for the economy this year, brokers said.

The composite index climbed 26.73

STOCKS/ B2

GOVERNMENT intensifying programs to teach OFWs and their families how and where to invest. PDI PHOTO

Gov't urges OFWs to invest, not spend

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND Development Authority said it wants the government to pursue programs that will entice families of overseas Filipino workers to engage in portfolio investments.

Dennis Arroyo, director of the Neda's policy and planning division, said encouraging families of OFWs to invest in mutual funds, stocks and other similar securities would help the country's capital market take advantage of the growing dollar inflows to the country.

Developing the country's capital market, Arroyo added, would in turn create more funds available for capital investments.

He said there were already existing programs aimed at teaching families of OFWs the skills needed in investing. Arroyo said the Neda supported the intensification of these programs so the growing dollar income from remittances of OFWs could be translated into investments.

Neda Director General Romulo Neri earlier raised the urgency to implement reforms aimed at addressing the country's relatively weak business climate when compared to other emerging economies.

Neri had said that according to lat-

GOV'T/ B2

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Gov't to retire more Brady bonds

$126M worth of bonds may be bought back in June

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING to buy back more Brady bonds in June as it continues to pursue its debt reduction efforts.

Should interest rates remain favorable in June, the time when the government is allowed to exercise a call option, the government will shell out cash to redeem the Brady bonds, National Treasurer Omar Cruz said.

A finance official said some $126 million worth of Brady bonds could be bought back in June.

"With our fiscal position improving, we have the capability to (buy back the bonds). It is an intrinsic part of our debt and risk management strategy," Cruz said at the sidelines of the membership meeting of the Fund Managers Association of the Philippines (FMAP) yesterday.

Last year, the government terminated more than $500 million worth of Brady bonds.

Some $3.35 billion worth of Brady bonds were issued in the 1990s to help the government meet its financial requirements. Prior to last year's buyback, the government had already retired $1.58 billion of the Brady bonds.

The bonds were named after Nicholas Brady, chief of the US Treasury during the term of US President Ronald Reagan, who proposed the issuance of the bonds to help heavily indebted countries like the Philippines restructure their commercial debts.

In the meantime, the government's budget deficit for 2006 was projected to be much lower than the P125-billion ceiling. Projections range from P62 billion to P90 billion. For this year, the government expects the deficit at only P63 billion, on track to meeting the goal of achieving zero deficit by 2008.

Fiscal authorities said the government's move to retire portion of the outstanding Brady bonds last year led to the release of some $256 million worth of collateral, composed of zero coupon US treasuries and similar assets. They said the amount freed helped improve the government's liquidity position.

Dow hits all-time high

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

A FRIEND HOSTED A LAURIAT for my 77th birthday in a beautiful hotel. The food was excellent but unfortunately, someone brought a bottle of wine. I tried to keep it away from my wife because after one glass, she sheds all her inhibitions. Unfortunately, while cutting the cake and blowing out all the candles (it took 10 minutes), my wife drank 3 glasses while nobody was looking. Suddenly, she jumped on the table and started doing a strip tease. Before she could bare all, a waiter appeared with a large tablecloth, thereby saving me from further embarrassment. We will never be able to eat in McDonald's again.

Another friend sent me two large boxes in the shape of a 7 so that put together, they formed 77. The cake was made from apple strudel and accompanied by a large bowl of cream, all the way from Iloilo. My wife inserted 77 candles (probably stolen from a nearby church) and proceeded to light them. Immediately, the smoke detector was set off and water sprinkled from the ceiling in all directions. We tried to stop it with ceiling wax but we were soon two feet deep in water. Even my fixed mortgage started floating.

I promised to buy her a car for the New Year but she liked fast cars and looked at Mercedes, Maseratis, Lamborghini's, Aston Martins and Jaguars. She wanted something that went from 0 to 220 in three seconds. So I bought her a bathroom scale. I reluctantly traded in my 10-year-old solar-powered, ethanol-driven, hybrid, amphibious tricycle and bought a Corona. It is hard to find a good driver (except in a golf shop) so we ended up with an old boy of 84 with cataracts. He drove down Edsa at 120 kph, weaving in between the buses and taxis. We were petrified and when I asked him why he drove so fast, he said, "I can't see very well so the quicker we get there, the less chance of an accident."

FedEx is merging with UPS. The new company will be called FED UP.

* * *

With nothing but good news coming out of the United States, the Dow hit an all-time high while the Nasdaq made a 6-year high. In December, consumer spending was up 0.9 percent, the highest in almost a year, the trade deficit narrowed slightly, the oil price collapsed to $51.88, a 19-month low and the dollar recovered, sending commodities lower. Consumer confidence jumped to its highest level in 2006 and the economy appears to be in good shape.

Hopes of a rate cut any time soon have disappeared and there is a slight possibility that the US might follow the Bank of England and make an unexpected rate hike to counter inflation. Interest rates are rising and a number of economists are predicting that the 10-year notes will eventually yield 5¼ percent or more. The differential between US Treasury bonds and our own have fallen dramatically and the timing of the Philippine government's sale of $1 billion worth of 25-year bonds was brilliant. We are fortunate to have Governor Tetangco at the central bank.

A soft landing in the US is good for all Asian countries, as it is everybody's main export market. Our exports are expected to grow by 11 percent this year. The Shanghai/Shenzhen index rose 130 percent last year and is up 11 percent so for this year. China is expected to grow at 9.5 percent though it has been advised to slow down a little to 9 percent to prevent overheating. The yuan has been allowed to depreciate a little more and is now at par with the Hong Kong dollar. But the depreciation is still marginal.

As Wall Street moves to record levels, other markets follow, including our own. The 91-day treasury bill yield, used as a benchmark for determining borrowing and lending rates, fell from 4.84 percent in November to 3.79 percent last week. This is so low that I doubt whether it can go much lower.

The President has signed the Biofuel Act into law but after rising to P5.90, COAT immediately dropped back to P5.40. ICT acquired a port in China (a major coup) and jumped to a peak of P25. JGS, which will make large non-recurring capital gains from the IPO's of RLC and URC, has made an all-time peak of P11.50. AEV, which is having an IPO in April to increase its cash, also made a new high of P8.8.

Power companies have been in demand and EDC has recovered from P4.45 to P5.10. FPH surged P8.50 in 3 days to stand at a high of P76. BPC, the parent company of the LOPEZ group has risen to P2.90. I remember it making a low of 8 centavos and MERB was P9. Property shares were in demand as they stand to gain from low interest rates. SMDC AT P3.45 and FDC have also done well. Banks were also bought, BPI is at a new high of P69.50 and MBT has also done well, rising to P55 and BDO is high at P46.

Only the telecom sector has been out of favor with TEL and GLO falling sharply. The mining sector has also been dull because of a steep fall in the price of copper to an 8-month low. No less than 13 companies are building ethanol plants. In the short term, this will be good for the country but in the longer term, we might have over-capacity.

The Asian summit should give a boost to the market and we can look forward to an Asian free trade bloc of 3 billion people by 2020, half the world's population. China has at last agreed to the inclusion of India, Australia and New Zealand. The simultaneous rise of China and India has made it inevitable that India be included and the enlarged bloc is expected to have huge economic benefits. Their output will be $9 trillion a year.

China is planning to invest P240 billion in Philippine agricultural products and this will provide much needed capital for rural infrastructure. They intend to develop 1.2 million hectares to grow corn, rice and other crops and may also build an ethanol plant.

The government is predicting the inflation for 2007 will be between 3.3 percent and 3.8 percent, far lower than in 2006. They are certain that the budget deficit will be about P81 billion, far below the P125 billion target, but have indicated that it could be as low as P63 billion. Everything appears to be going well for the country and this is reflected in the index breaking 3000 for the first time since 1997.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

11-month OFW remittances hit all-time high

From page B1

cilitate faster and easier transfer of remittances by OFWs to their beneficiaries," he said.

The increasing shift by OFWs away from informal channels, especially given the steady decline in remittances charges by banks, is also seen to further increase the flows coursed through the banking system.

In 2005, the BSP assumed in its external payments computation that 20 percent of OFW inflows were done outside of the banking system and flowing instead through informal channels, defined as unlicensed or unregulated operations such as friends, acquaintances or other travelers. This so-called leakage in the OFW remittance flows has now gone down to 10 percent in 2006 and is expected to further decline to 5 percent by this year, based on the BSP's latest estimates.

An earlier study on the Mexican experience showed that remittances held as deposits in the banking system would yield a beneficial multiplier effect of between two to three times as these could be channeled to investments, including small and microbusinesses. As such, the BSP is promoting the use of formal banking channels as a safer and more productive cash remittance system for millions of Filipinos working abroad.

Through the years, OFW remittances have made the Philippine economy more resilient to shocks that could otherwise affect growth, inflation, external accounts and employment. In terms of employment, for instance, the ratio of jobless Filipinos would have doubled to 20 percent from the current 10 percent if all OFWs remained in the country instead.

For the first nine months of 2006, cash remittances from OFWs accounted for about a fifth (17.8 percent) of total current account receipts and about 10 percent of gross national product.

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Gov't urges OFWs …

From page B1

est data, the country's investment-to-GDP (gross domestic product) ratio shrunk to only 14.5 percent from an estimated 19.5 percent six years ago.

The country's chief economist said that following the government's success in improving its economic condition, such as through a lower budget deficit and higher economic growth, this should be followed through with microeconomic reforms.

Arroyo said that to help translate the government's achievements in the macroeconomic front, microeconomic reforms such as encouraging OFW families to engage in investment activities was essential.

Remittances from OFWs had been hitting record highs due to the rising number of Filipinos being deployed abroad. (See story on this page.)

Arroyo said the Neda was pushing for additional support for the development of small and medium enterprises.

The government's economic team is pushing for the immediate passage of a bill seeking to create a credit bureau. The officials believe that with a credit bureau, more banks would be encouraged to lend to small and medium businesses.

The proposed credit bureau will provide financial institutions the credit information background they need from loan applicants. Some banks are currently not at ease lending to small and medium-sized businesses because of the high cost of credit investigations.

Stocks up …

From page B1

points to 3,019.06. The broader all-shares index rose 19.35 points to 1,888.28.

Some 1.91 billion shares worth P1.97 billion were traded. Gainers led losers 71 to 30, while 61 stocks ended unchanged.

The government on Friday announced that it has revised upward its GDP projection this year to 6.1-6.7 percent, with an improved current account position and a stronger peso.

Previously, the GDP target was 5.7-6.5 percent for the whole year. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 15, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.1	7.2	7.1	7.1	56,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	45	46	45	46	1,648,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67.5	69.5	67.5	69.5	2,270,400
China Banking Corp.	685	685	685	685	17,280
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	13,000
Citystate Savings Bank	19.25	19.25	19.25	19.25	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.47	7,550,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	80	80.5	80	80.5	7,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	53.5	55.5	53	55	10,148,200
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	49	49	49	49	700
Philippine National Bank	47	47.5	47	47.5	50,800
Phil. Savings Bank	48	48	48	48	2,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	29	30	29	29.5	209,600
Security Bank Corp.	67	67.5	67	67.5	81,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	51	51.5	50.5	51.5	69,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	220,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.9	5	4.9	5	260,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	29	30.5	29	30.5	12,500
Manulife Financial Corp.	1620	1630	1620	1630	710
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.42	1.46	1.42	1.46	106,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	290	295	290	295	3,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2010	2020	2010	2010	910
Ivantage Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	740,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	4.9	5.1	4.9	5.1	50,682,000
First Gen Corp.	53.5	55	53.5	55	1,840,300
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	73	76	73	76	2,146,000
Manila Electric Co. A	57	58.5	57	58	232,500
Manila Electric Co. B	58.5	59	58	59	743,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.9	9	8.8	8.9	2,966,000
Petron Corp.	4.1	4.15	4.1	4.15	4,380,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	7,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	1,300,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
CADP Group Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	9,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	21	21	21	21	21,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	43	44.5	43	44.5	529,800
RFM Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	476,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	2.8	2.85	1,305,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	140,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	64.5	63.5	64	94,100
San Miguel Corp. B	76.5	79	76.5	79	324,500
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.06	2.06	1.98	2	3,564,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.25	19.75	19.25	19.5	2,119,600
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.22	1.26	1.22	1.24	39,926,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	4,681,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	20,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8	8.6	8	8.3	2,469,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	3,000
Republic Cement Corp.	4.35	4.4	4.35	4.4	416,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.4	4,444,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.72	0.73	39,000,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	4,250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	603,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	52,000,000
Ayala Corp.	570	595	570	585	146,140
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.66	0.7	0.65	0.68	2,480,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	8.9	9	8.7	8.9	1,428,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.3	8.5	3,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc	0.065	0.0675	0.0625	0.065	169,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	79,000
APC Group Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.4	23,880,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	42,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	390,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	73,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	5,500
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.8	2.9	2.75	2.9	23,107,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	812,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	282,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	410,000
House of Investments Inc.	2.08	2.08	2.06	2.06	351,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.25	638,700
Medco Holdings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	550,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	4.7	4.9	4.65	4.65	390,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.88	1.94	1,575,000
Pacifica	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	10,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,000,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	60,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	1,740,000
SM Investments Corp.	317.5	322.5	317.5	322.5	1,003,800
South China Resources Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	30,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.62	1.64	1.6	1.6	182,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	4,560,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.14	4,190,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.5	9,014,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	200,000
Belle Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.22	1.22	1,252,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.68	1.68	415,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.48	4,920,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	112,000
C & P Homes Inc	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	144,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	100,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.185	0.2	0.185	0.2	60,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.64	0.68	0.64	0.67	97,900,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	140,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	1,200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.66	1.7	78,460,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	430,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Interport Res.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	2,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	50,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.56	0.57	0.54	0.56	4,900,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.87	0.89	0.85	0.85	6,200,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.38	2.38	33,534,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	5.3	5.5	5.3	5.3	161,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.165	0.17	0.165	0.17	1,820,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	4,153,700
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.69	0.71	0.68	0.7	7,420,000
SM Development Corp.	3.4	3.55	3.4	3.45	4,977,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.25	4,404,700
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	840,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.105	800,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	19	19	18.75	18.75	33,600
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1	1	1	1	110,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	2.04	2.06	1.96	1.96	15,023,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1180	1195	1180	1180	58,210
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.4	4,422,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2440	2450	2440	2440	157,120
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.27	0.22	0.27	73,960,000
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	10,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.6	2.65	658,000
IPVG Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.75	3.8	225,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.06	0.0625	0.06	0.0625	5,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.42	126,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.55	2.6	2.42	2.46	3,126,000
Philweb Corp.	0.033	0.034	0.033	0.034	52,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4	4	4	298,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	25	25	24.75	24.75	726,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	70,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	8	8.5	8	8.5	70,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.1	2.16	2.1	2.14	890,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	32,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	900,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.59	640,000
EDUCATION					
iPeople Inc.	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	96,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.06	2.12	2.06	2.12	97,000
Paxys Inc.	19.5	20.75	19.5	20.25	567,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	30,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.4	113,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	184,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	52,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.9	8.9	8.7	8.9	1,773,000
Benguet Corp. A	9	9	9	9	80,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	240,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	4,890,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	174,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.027	42,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	30,300,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.75	3.75	2,698,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	15.5	16.75	15.5	16.5	327,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.72	0.72	0.67	0.69	680,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.46	901,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	4,500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	12,200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	1,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	499,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	380,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.25	81,300
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	1,687,500
Metro Pac. Inv.- Warrants	4	4.1	4	4	209,000
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES					
Information Capital Tech.	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.5	4,000

CURRENCIES

January 15, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.773934	1.000000	49.0180
Japan	Yen	0.006431	0.008310	0.4073
United Kingdom	Pound	1.516059	1.958900	96.0214
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.099235	0.128222	6.2852
Switzerland	Franc	0.620289	0.801475	39.2867
Canada	Dollar	0.662388	0.855871	41.9531
Singapore	Dollar	0.501935	0.648550	31.7906
Australia	Dollar	0.605677	0.782595	38.3612
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.052821	2.652450	130.0178
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.206360	0.266638	13.0701
Brunei	Dollar	0.500313	0.646454	31.6879
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021588	0.027894	1.3673
UAE	Dirham	0.210732	0.272287	13.3470
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.292100	63.3362
Korea	Won	0.000823	0.001064	0.0522
China	Yuan**	0.099242	0.128231	6.2856
Argentina	Peso	0.251277	0.324675	15.9149
Brazil	Real	0.361702	0.467355	22.9088
Denmark	Kroner	0.134207	0.173409	8.5002
India	Rupee	0.017462	0.022563	1.1060
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220368	0.284738	13.9573
Mexico	New Peso	0.070601	0.091224	4.4716
New Zealand	Dollar	0.535113	0.691419	33.8920
South Africa	Rand	0.107193	0.138504	6.7892
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023635	0.030539	1.4970

Breaktime

From page B6

* * *

Okay, let us not get carried away now. I am just trying to say that, as usual, the biggest problem of business comes from politics—too much of it.

Right now corporate think tanks are talking about a forthcoming double whammy to business, courtesy of this cute administration.

Word has it that Gloriaetta is pressuring Congress, particularly the House of Representatives, to approve an across-the-board wage hike.

With such a convenient excuse, congressmen should have no qualms about returning to the old discredited method of their playing god by legislating wage increases.

The only question now is, perhaps, how much wage increase the House is willing to fry business with, since at the moment the proposed increase stands at P125 per day.

Just how many companies can afford such a stiff increase, is impossible to say. Well, some of them do not follow the legal wage levels, anyway.

* * *

Still, in business, they only know one thing: Most companies will have to cut back on manpower, i.e., lay off workers.

Question: If business is staring at the prospect of lay-offs, where did this cute administration get its forecast of higher growth rate? From out of the air again?

Anyway, the second instalment of this cute administration's double treat to business this year also forces companies to cough up more money for their work force.

And that is none other than the insistence of the SSS to raise the employers' contribution to the pension fund by a whopping 15 percent.

Which of course gives business just another good reason to lay off more workers!

* * *

Word is going around that, for some reason, this cute administration is inclined to go along with the SSS proposal for an increase in the employers' contribution, which possibly was crafted by the highly paid SSS consultants.

The thing is that, everybody in big business knows that the SSS does not exactly take good care of the members' money.

For example, the other pension fund, the GSIS, already cashed in its bad investments in Equitable-PCI Bank at a good-enough price of P92 per share.

SSS is still caught in the deal that was done right before the elections in 2004, in which the SSS shares in the same bank were priced at an amazingly low P43 apiece.

The point is that big business has no love lost for the way the SSS mismanages the employers' contribution that the SSS now wants to increase.

* * *

And here is the icing on the salary-increase cake: Word has it that Gloriaetta wants a 10-percent increase, on the average, in the base pay of government employees.

Supposedly, the increase will take effect this July, meaning, right after the elections, but the announcement will just have to be made during the ... well, campaign period, of course.

The question is, since Congress forgot to pass a new budget for 2007, and it is just recycling a three-year-old budget, where will this cute administration get the extra money for Gloriaetta's bright idea of an across-the-board wage increase?

Simple, my pimple, this cute administration can just use the P10.3-billion allotted for the so-called GCA—the government compensation classification act.

That is the bill the Civil Service Commission is pushing in Congress, which seeks to give rhyme and reason to the government pay scale.

In the past few months, Civil Service chair Karina David has been going around, explaining the bill to lawmakers and business groups.

So much so that, if the money for the GCA goes to an across-the-board pay increase instead, all the work will be ... well, let me see, wasted?

* * *

Under the proposed bill, actually, the CSC wants to institute a pay increase based on merits—as against that across-the-board pay increase envisioned by the Palace in an election year.

Thus, under the bill, jobs with crucial role in public service should be assigned higher pay scale, such as teachers, policemen and social workers.

Aside from that, the government sector needs to play catch-up with the private sector.

For instance, an executive in government is paid only 25 percent of the executive pay in the private sector, while a technical staff member in the government gets only 60 percent.

In comparison, an administration staff member in the government gets 20 percent MORE than the pay for the same job in the private sector.

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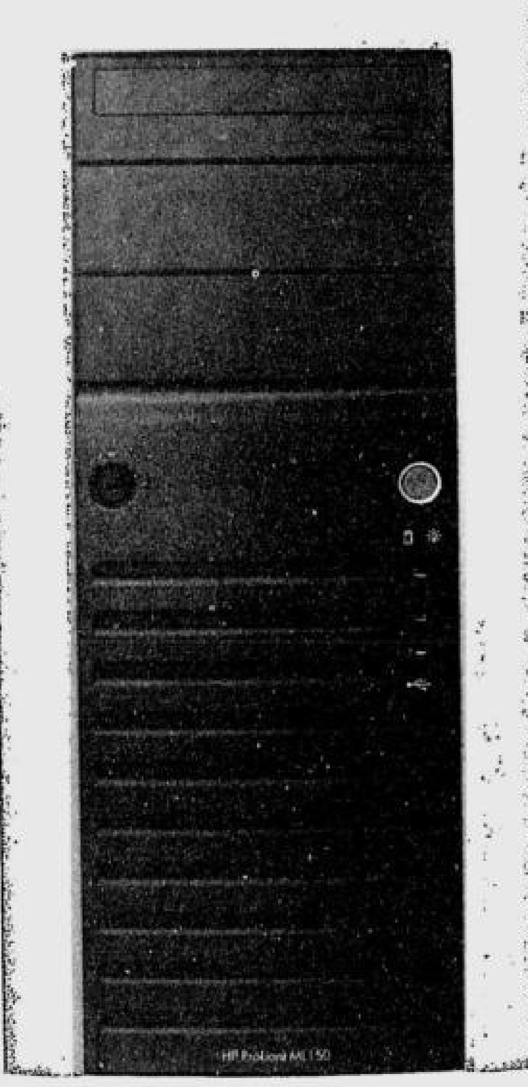

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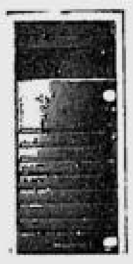

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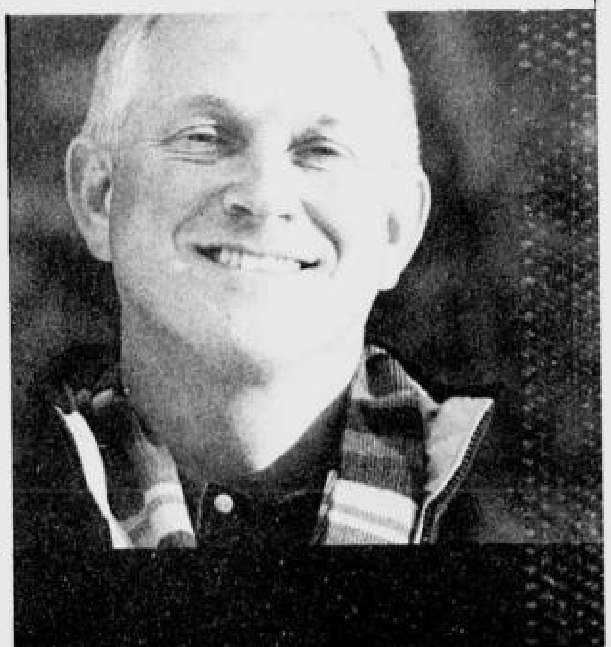

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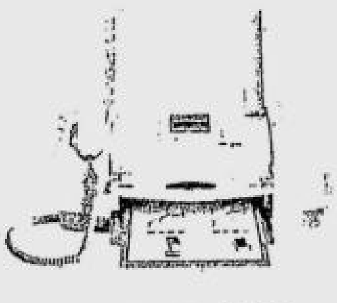

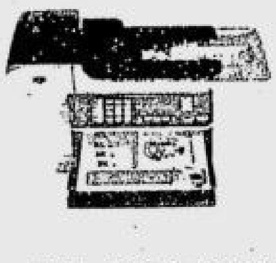

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Pana releases 4th issue of AdEdge 'Reaching the Global Pinoy'

THE PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL Advertisers (Pana) has just released the fourth issue of the AdEdge magazine. AdEdge is the official publication of the organization and the only trade magazine that serves the entire community of Philippine-based advertisers.

The new and revitalized AdEdge combines style and substance - with a power-packed line-up providing a wealth of information on marketing and advertising trends. With the theme, "Reaching the Global Pinoy," this latest issue provides a look into the huge, thriving and eager market that has been progressively shaping up outside Philippine shores over the past years.

Whether as immigrants or overseas workers, there are as many as 15 million Filipinos, in countries around the world, who are looking to their homeland with a sense of longing, an emerging patriotism and acknowledged fealty to their roots.

The immensity of this global Filipino village represents big business for local companies as they tap into the vast potential of this market that's more than ripe for the picking - whether through traditional modes of marketing and advertising or the utilization of new technologies that make global reach possible.

This issue of AdEdge tackles the many facets of this phenomenon - from providing global Pinoys with a piece of home through local companies that have reached out to international markets, to establishing a link to Philippine culture and society provided by technology and the various media, to how marketing and the development of industries serve as an instrument of economic growth. It attempts to give a glimpse of the Filipino's psyche amid the multi-faceted context of foreign culture and perhaps reveal the underlying thread that bonds Filipinos no matter where they have resettled - surely, useful and relevant insights for the creative global marketer and the responsible consumer.

Specifically, the fourth issue of AdEdge features the success stories of local favorites such as Goldilocks, Jollibee, and San Miguel and how they were able to break through borders, tastes, and time and achieve cult followings in the international market. It also features well-loved Filipino products such as Godiva, Magic Sing, and Oishi that have become international household favorites as well. And it has a special feature on digital marketing - the latest trend in customer-focused promotion and on online gaming - a phenomenon that connects Filipinos around the world together.

The latest issue of AdEdge is now available in selected National Book Store branches around Metro Manila namely: NBS-Cubao Superbranch, NBS-Filinvest (Festival Mall), NBS-Glorietta, NBS-Greenbelt, NBS-Katipunan, NBS-Ortigas (Megamall), NBS-SM North Edsa, NBS-Quezon Ave., and NBS-Recto. For inquiries, please call the Pana secretariat at 894-0474 or 894-0475. Look for Mia Espiritu.

HI-DEF RESOURCE THROWS LAUNCH PARTY

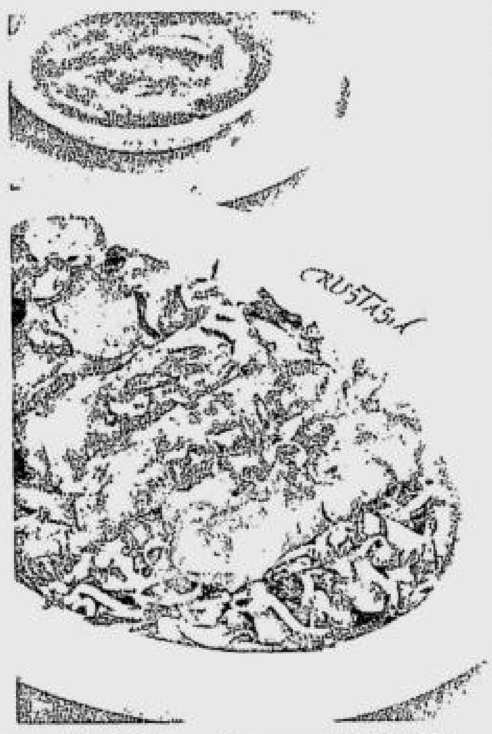
The best-kept secret in broadcast equipment supply, Hi-Def Resource LLC established in California USA by CEO Maridul Acevedo, now has a subsidiary in the country. Hi-Def Resource Inc, Philippines is a full service broadcast and Audio-Visual company specializing in Design, Integration, Equipment Sales, Service and Support for a host of different applications from TV broadcast to High Definition post production. Hi-Def Resource has been supplying equipment for major production houses such as Unitel Productions, Shoot Digital/CMB Films, Wild Fire Productions and DV Mix. The company recently celebrated its launch in the country with a dinner party for its top clients and suppliers. Hi-Def Resource Inc, Philippines is located at #28 Bright Hill St. New Manila, Quezon City. For more information, contact 722-6427 or log on to www.hidefresource.com. In photo are event host Krista Ranillo and celebrity guests Bella Flores and Gloria Sevilla.

Foreign tourists eye RP for '2nd homes'

THE PHILIPPINES IS BEGINNING to attract the attention of foreign buyers of vacation houses and condo units. This develops as foreign tourists come to realize the country's very affordable real estate, lower cost of living, nice tropical climate, and very friendly English-speaking population. Thus, some of them end up buying houses in the Philippines after several trips as tourists. Such houses become their second homes since they always retain their residential units in their native countries and usually spend time in the Philippines only during autumn and winter. Nonetheless, the foreigners with second homes in the Philippines are attracting other tourists themselves as they entice relatives and friends to visit them and experience their new-found environment, culture, or lifestyle. These visiting friends and relatives are a boon to the local tourism industry since many of them similarly stay in resorts and hotels before eventually buying their own second homes. As such, there are real estate projects now being developed in the country exclusively for them, making the Philippines contribute to the gradual emergence of tropical Asia as a global second-home destination. This is the reason why the Philippines has been chosen as the venue of the "1st Asian International Real Estate Expo and Conference" (AIREEC) that will bring the global second-home market and industry to Manila. Slated at the Philippine International Convention Center and the World Trade Center on Dec. 6 to 10 this year, AIREEC will bring business to various property and tourism-related sectors through pre-arranged one-on-one meetings, network lounges, business matching, celebrity nights, and maximum industry and market exposure to its large number of participants from all over the world - from North, Central and South America to Europe, Africa, East Asia, Middle East, and the rest of Asia. Other details on AIREEC can be obtained from event organizer ECPI (tel. 729-2477, website www.aireec.com, email info@aireec.com).

ProductFILES

Emperors Buffet at Crustasia



THE BEST OF VIETnamese, Thai, and Chinese cuisine only at Crustasia The Podium. Bring your family and friends from Friday to Sunday to enjoy a grand selection of delectable dishes prepared by the finest chef in Asia. Lunch is served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Emperors Buffet includes Crustasia's sumptuous crab and seafood dishes, menu from the ala carte such as King Dao Spareribs, Scallop and Beancurd Hot Pot, Salt and Pepper Jumbo Belly Chops, Pineapple Fried Rice, Pan-Fried Catfish with Green Curry Sauce, Vegetables Thai Style, Stir Fried Beef, Thai Papaya Salad, Eggplant Salad steamed rolls and a lot more plus our Thai Halo Halo Station for desert lovers. Crustasia is located at the third floor, of The Podium, 18 ADB Ave., Ortigas Center. Visit the branch at Crustasia Rockwell Power Plant Mall in Makati City which offers ala carte. Please call 728-5463 or 631-3857 for inquiries and reservations.

What you need to know about swallowing disorders

FOR NEARLY 50 PERCENT OF stroke patients, something as natural and reflexive as swallowing can prove to be a difficult, painful and sometimes fatal exercise. More disturbing, only 2 percent of all stroke patients are diagnosed with the condition. Here then, are answers to questions on swallowing disorders that should be more frequently asked.

Q: How do you know if a patient has a swallowing disorder?

A: Often, a patient with a swallowing disorder is unable to hold his food and drink in his mouth, or finds it difficult to move food in his mouth. He also retains or "pockets" food in his mouth after a swallow. The patient may also feel like food is stuck in his throat, feel pain while swallowing, and cough before, after, or during the swallow.

Q: Why are swallowing disorders sometimes fatal?

A: Severe cases of swallowing disorders can lead to aspiration pneumonia, an infection of the lungs caused by foreign material, such as food, in the lungs. Because the structures involved in breathing and swallowing are in such close proximity, the lack of coordination the mouth and throat muscles may cause food and drink particles to go into the airway. The bacteria in the lungs from food and drink can cause death.

Q: Are stroke patients the only ones who suffer from swallowing disorders?

A: No. Swallowing disorders affect 13 percent of the population, according to a 1991 study. They include patients recovering from thyroid surgery or those with head and neck injuries, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, motor neuron diseases and cerebral palsy

Q: What can be done to help a patient with swallowing disorders?

A: A patient can be trained to learn how to swallow again through exercises that stimulate the tongue and the mouth. This includes double swallowing to ensure food goes down the esophagus. It also stimulates the muscles of the palate. A chin-tuck is another exercise to improve a patient's swallowing ability. However, a physiatrist would be in the best position to recommend the exercises a patient needs based on the diagnosis of an ENT (ear-nose-throat) specialist.

Q: How can caregivers see to the nutritional needs of patients with swallowing disorders?

A: Fresenius Kabi, the leader of infusion therapy and clinical nutrition in Europe, has just introduced Thick & Easy in the Philippines. Thick & Easy is a starch-based thickener that when added to food and drinks results in a dense, cohesive consistency that allows patients with swallowing disorders to better control the food in their mouth.

Q: Why are food thickeners like Thick & Easy vital to patients with swallowing disorders?

A: Without Thick & Easy, doctors warn that patients with swallowing disorders can suffer from systemic complications that include dehydration, malnutrition and weight loss, and chronic respiratory insufficiency. Thick & Easy is far better at controlling the consistency of food than proxy thickeners like gelatin. In addition, Thick & Easy releases 98 percent of the available fluids in food-helping prevent dehydration. It can be used to create varied, appealing and appetizing meals and minimizes the risk of aspiration pneumonia. Because it has no taste and can be mixed to achieve a wide range of consistencies, Thick & Easy can be used with a variety of hot or cold food and drinks including soft drinks, coffee and tea. With Thick & Easy, food can also be prepared in bulk and can be used in standardized menus. It also has a shelf life of three years, making it cost-effective.

Q: Where can Thick & Easy be purchased?

A: You can try out three free sample sachets of Thick & Easy by calling hotline 889-6492 loc. 123. You can also purchase Thick & Easy at selected Mercury Drugstores.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
JUTHEVAN TRADING CORP. 24-C Marina Sq. Condo., M.H. del Pilar cor. Pedro Gil & Ambassador Sts., Malate, Manila	Seong Woo Kim	Finance Manager
SAEMAEUL TRADING INC. 24 San Luis St., Brgy. Batis, San Juan, Metro Manila	Bong Gi Lee	Treasurer
MIT UNIVERSAL INSTITUTE INC. 4/F JGC Bldg., 1606 Trade St. cor. Investment Dr., Madrigal Bus. Park, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Hoseok Kwak	Assistant School Administrator
KANTOH INTERNATIONAL MARBLE CORP. Unit 204 Pacific Coast Plaza, Tambo, Parañaque City	Oh Gil Kwon	Production Manager
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 2604 Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Charly Tandyono	Customer Support Staff
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 2604 Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Denny	Customer Support Staff
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 2604 Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Hoe Sheng Ng	Customer Support Staff
OHSUNG TRAVEL & TOURS AGENCY, INC. Unit 13-8137 Plaza J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yeosun Lee	Asst. Manager
FALCON WATERFREE PHILIPPINES, INC. Suite 1602, 88 Corporate Center 141 Valero St., Makati City	Dietmar Ludwig Gorges	General Manager
AUTHENTIC CLOTHING INCORPORATED 786 Riverside Drive, Brgy. J. Dela Peña, Provident Village, Marikina City	Mohan Krishnasamy	General Manager
JUTHEVAN TRADING CORPORATION 24-C Marina Square Cond., M.H. Del Pilar cor. P. Gil & Ambassador Sts., Malate, Manila	Ae Hee Kim	Assistant Finance Manager
JUTHEVAN TRADING CORPORATION 24-C Marina Square Cond., M.H. Del Pilar cor. P. Gil & Ambassador Sts., Malate, Manila	Dukhee Kim (w/o Shin)	Operation Manager
GOOD MEN TRAVEL AGENCY, INC. Unit 7E, 7/F Anchor Bay Tower Metropolitan Park, Pasay City	Sung Jin Shin	Manager for Operations

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Jan. 16, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
National Irrigation Administration
Region VI, Pila, Laguna

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Second Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDPII)
Construction of San Isidro - Candangal CIP
Macalelon, Quezon
Loan 7152-PH

January 16, 2007

The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a loan from The World Bank towards the cost of the Second Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDPII) and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the LGU counterpart funds, to payments under the contract for the Construction of SAN ISIDRO - CANDANGAL COMMUNAL IRRIGATION PROJECT (Packages I-IV) located at Macalelon, Quezon under Contract Number RIIRR 06 293 03 CAS-Q.

The National Irrigation Administration Regional Office No. IV now invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for the Construction of SAN ISIDRO - CANDANGAL COMMUNAL IRRIGATION PROJECT located at Macalelon, Quezon under Contract No RIIRR 06 293 03 CAS-Q and is expected to be completed and delivered within the specified calendar days below from the date of the official start of the subproject.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

SCOPE OF WORK	PERCENTAGE	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	NO. OF CALENDAR DAYS TO COMPLETE	AMOUNT OF BID SECURITY
Package I - Diversion Works	92%	8,676,207.96	210	Php140,978.40
Access Road	8%	722,352.00		
Package II - Canal Structures	100%	14,936,227.67	270	Php224,043.41
Package III - Canal Structures	100%	14,655,085.01	270	Php219,828.28
Package IV - Canal Structures	100%	15,271,438.62	270	Php229,071.58

(Bill of quantities/detailed of item of work is included in the Bid Data Sheet (BDS) of Bidding Documents)

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Subject to exceptions stated in this Bidding Documents, only Bids from Bidders who pass an eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification. The Total Estimated Project Cost per package are shown in the above matrix.

The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instruction to Bidders.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the National Irrigation Administration Region IV - BAC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on January 17 to February 19, 2007.

A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP7,500.00. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before 10:00 a.m. February 19, 2007.

The BAC-NIA, Region IV, Pila, Laguna will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on February 7, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the Office of the BAC Chairman, NIA-Region IV, Pila, Laguna.

Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before the scheduled opening of bids. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of *CASH, MANAGER'S CHECK, CASHIER'S CHECK AND BANK GUARANTEE* and in an amount specified above as per package or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at the Office of The BAC Chairman, NIA-Region IV, Pila, Laguna.

Minimum Equipment Required:

For PACKAGE I - Concrete Vibrator (4 units) - owned; Bulldozer 180 Hp (1 unit) - owned; Dump Truck min. 10 cu.m cap. (4 units) - owned; Conc. Mixer 1 Bagger (5 units) - owned, Backhoe .50 min cap. (2 units) - owned, Water Pump 4" dia. (4 units) - owned; Surveying Instruments (1 set) - owned, Material Testing Apparatus (1 set) - owned; Loader (1 unit) - owned; Road Grader (1 unit) - owned; Bar Cutter (2 units) - owned (Other documents include valid PCAB license, valid and current Mayor's permit, BIR tax clearance and Dole Certification)

For PACKAGE II - IV - Minimum Equipment Required: Concrete Vibrator (4 units) - owned; Bulldozer 180 Hp (2 units) - owned, Dump Truck min. 10 cu.m. cap. (2 units) - owned, Conc. Mixer 1 Bagger (5 units) - owned. Backhoe .50 min. cap. (2 units) - owned; Water Pump 4" dia. (2 units) - owned; Surveying Instruments (1 set) - owned; Material Testing Apparatus (1 set) - owned, Bar Cutter - 2 units (owned). (Other documents include valid PCAB license, valid and current Mayor's permit, BIR tax clearance and Dole Certification).

Other bidding activities which will be held at the office of The Chairman, BAC, Engineering Division, NIA - Region IV, Pila, Laguna are listed below:

	DATE/TIME OF PRE-BID CONFERENCE	DATE/TIME OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS	DATE/TIME OF OPENING OF BIDS
PACKAGE I	February 7, 2007 10:00 AM	February 19, 2007 up to 9:59 AM	February 19, 2007 10:00 AM
PACKAGE II	February 7, 2007 10:00 AM	February 19, 2007 up to 9:59 AM	February 19, 2007 11:00 AM
PACKAGE III	February 7, 2007 10:00 AM	February 19, 2007 up to 9:59 AM	February 19, 2007 1:30 PM
PACKAGE IV	February 7, 2007 10:00 AM	February 19, 2007 up to 9:59 AM	February 19, 2007 2:00 PM

The BAC-NIA Region IV, Pila, Laguna reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Mr ROMEO R. AÑONUEVO
BAC Chairman
National Irrigation Administration
Region IV
Pila, Laguna
Telephone No. 049-5590723

(Sgd.) ROMEO R. AÑONUEVO
BAC CHAIRMAN

Approved:

(Sgd.) EFREN S. ROQUEZA
Officer-In-Charge

(PDI - Jan. 16, 2007)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time		Non-Refundable Fee
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
1 Lot Supply, Delivery and Installation of Systems Furniture at LBP Iloilo Office Building	P6,000,000.00	January 25, 2007 10:00 AM	February 7, 2007 1:00 PM	P 3,000.00
1 Lot Supply, Delivery and Installation of 2 Units Automatic Low Voltage Capacitor Banks, Rated 1200k VAR, 480V, 60Hz, 3 Phase in NEMA 1 Free Standing Vertical Panels, Powder Coated Finish, Inclusive of Applicable Labor and Materials	P2,400,000.00	January 25, 2007 2:00 PM	February 7, 2007 1:00 PM	P 1,200.00

The Bid Documents shall be available at the Procurement Department (ProD) starting January 16, 2007 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at ProD Conference Room, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes placed in single outer envelope and sealed accordingly in the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the ProD-Requisitions Management Division at telephone no. 551-2200 locals 2452, 2453, 7233 & 7234.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI–Jan. 16, 2007)

FRANCISCO SANTOS DIZON

of Davao City and Porac, Pampanga

Peacefully joined his Creator
on the 14th of January 2007 at the age of 85.

He is survived by:

His loving wife **Pacita de los Santos Dizon**;
Children: **Marilyn** and **Richard Ferguson**
Francisco III (**Boy**) and **Elizabeth** (**Beth**) **Alvarez**
Jocelyn (**Jojo**) and †**Donald Urieta**
Madeline (**Bebot**) and **Jose Mari** (**Joe**) **Marfori**
Philip (**Sonny**) and **Jacqueline** (**Jacky**) **Garcia**
Ronald (**Ronnie**)
Elizabeth (**Betsy**) and **Guillermo** (**Willie**) **Torres, Jr.**
Catherine (**Jeannie**) and **Dr. Pablo Enrique**, **Posas**,
Sisters: **Emilia** and **Felisa**; 26 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren,
relatives and in-laws request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City unitl 17th of January 2007.

He will then be flown to Davao City on January 18th where he will again, lie in state at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Home until 22nd of January 2007.

Pre-burial Mass will be held at the San Pedro Cathedral, Davao City at 2:00 p.m. on the 23rd of January. His body will be laid to rest at the Davao Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Maharlika Foundation, Carmelite Sisters, Missionaries of Charity or Davao Medical Center will be greatly appreciated.

Dr. Clemens John C. Concepcion

"MENGIE"

Medical Director, Montalban Infirmary

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 14, 2007.

He is survived by his wife **Malou**; mother **Delia**; brothers and sisters **Jenny, Robert, Lady & Me-ann**; in-laws **Cecille, Aileen, Craig & Renan** as well as nephews and nieces. They and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapels 1 & 2, Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Interment will be on January 18, 2007 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

"I am
the way,
the truth
and the
life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me."

John 14:6

CLASSIFIEDS

More CLASSIFIED ADS on pages...

Securities and Exchange Commission A18-A19
Department of Labor and Employment B4
National Irrigation Administration-Region IV B4
Land Bank of the Philippines B4

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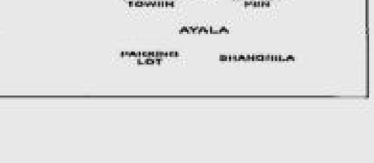

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ERRATUM

In the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid of **Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital** published last **Jan. 15, 2007**, the price per unit of Item No.22 (Bassinet w/ mattress) should have read **P6,100.00/unit** and not as published.

Our apologies.

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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Regional Office No. III
City of San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. No. (045) 963-6114 • Telefax No. (045) 961-5139
Email: coaregion3@yahoo.com.ph • Website: www.coa.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Contract Reference No.: 2007-01

The COA Regional Office No. III, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Constructors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Construction of Two-Storey COA Provincial Satellite Office
Location : Balili, Iba, Zambales
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P10,000,000.00
Contract Duration : 150 Calendar Days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License Category Small "B", have completed a similar contract with the value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

Jan. 16-24, 2007	– Receipt of Letters of Intent and Issuance of Eligibility Forms
January 24, 2007	– Deadline for the Receipt of Eligibility Requirements
January 25, 2007	– Eligibility Screening at 9:00 a.m.
January 26, 2007	– Notice of Results of Eligibility Check
January 26-30, 2007	– Issuance of Bid Documents
February 5, 2007	– Pre-Bid Conference @ 9:00 a.m.
February 19, 2007	– Receipt and Opening of Bids @ 9:00 a.m.

Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements in a sealed envelope to the BAC Secretariat, Second Floor, Computer Training Center, Regional Office No. III, Government Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando, Pampanga on or before the deadline as stated above. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to Bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Four Thousand Pesos (P4,000.00) to the COA Regional Office III Cashier.

The COA Regional Office No. III assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) FLAVIA S. BLEZA
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Jan. 16, 2007)

HITACHI AIR CONDITIONING PRODUCTS (PHILS.), INC.
No. 1A Binictican Drive, Subic Bay Industrial Park Phase II
Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines
Tel. Nos. (63)47-252-1990/1133/1633 Fax No. (63)47-252-1600

We are in need of applicants for the positions:

1 DESIGN DEPARTMENT MANAGER & 1 MATERIAL DEPARTMENT MANAGER

Qualifications:
- Mechanical Engineering Graduate (For Design)
- Industrial Engineering Graduate (For Material)
- Male, 35-40 years old
- At least 7-10 years experience in Design and Production Management (for Design Department Manager)
- At least 7-10 years experience in Material Cost and Production Management (for Material Department Manager)
- An Experience in Air Conditioning or its related industry is an advantage.
- Knows how to speak fluent Mandarin

Qualified and interested applicants may send their resumé with NBI Clearance, Birth Certificate and Employment Certificate to:

SBMA Labor Department
Subic Bay Freeport Zone

Contact Person: Estelito C. Aliño, Jr.
General Affairs Department-Section Manager
Hitachi Air Conditioning Products (Phils.), Inc.

CALL POEA 24-HOUR HOTLINES **722-1144 or 722-1155**

BUSINESS

Gov't receives ₱2.6B from Napocor

State-run power firm reports net income of almost ₱86B in '05

By Abigail L. Ho

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A DECADE, the state-run National Power Corp. remitted P2.6 billion in dividends to the national government, after posting a net income of almost P86 billion in 2005.

In a statement issued yesterday, the state firm said it had already informed the Bureau of Treasury of the dividend payout in a letter dated Jan. 2.

The Department of Finance recommended to the Office of the President how much Napocor should turn over to the national government, as prescribed by RA 7656.

RA 7656 requires all government-owned or -controlled corporations to declare part of their yearly earnings to the national government as dividends.

Since Napocor had been in the red for almost 10 years, it was only this year that it was able to declare dividends for profits it posted in 2005.

The P86-billion net income that the state firm registered in 2005 was the highest ever in its 70-year corporate history.

According to Napocor, some "rigorous" cost-cutting programs implemented in 2005 enabled it to save close to P25 billion.

These measures included the economic load dispatching of its power plants, or prioritizing the dispatch of plants using lower-priced fuels, such as hydro and geothermal, as well as the improved operational efficiency of its generation facilities.

Napocor also optimized the use of cheaper local coal to fuel some of its plants.

The state firm likewise reduced overall operating expenses, deferred some capital expenditures, and slashed contractual obligations to some of its independent power producers.

Aside from the various cost-reduction measures, other factors that contributed to the state firm's turnaround in 2005 was the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of adjustments in its generation rate adjustment mechanism (Gram), incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera), and overall tariffs.

The strong peso also boosted Napocor's performance as it significantly eased the state firm's repayment burden on its long-term dollar- and yen-denominated debts.

The government's absorption of P200 billion of Napocor's outstanding liabilities, as provided by RA 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, also aided in giving the state firm a positive bottom line.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar had earlier said that the state firm hoped to maintain its net income position in 2006.

However, he did not give an exact profit target.

Frankly, my deal

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

HERE'S THE DEAL: For business this year, I am frankly a little worried.

Sure, this cute administration performed its pre-election media gimmick, bragging that it was raising its forecast on our economic growth rate.

Whatever inspired it to raise the forecast, only heaven can tell. I just pray that its inspiration did not come from all that "hot money" from abroad.

That kind of money can come and go faster than presidential sidekick Secretary Michael Defensor can open his mouth on every issue in the land.

Anyway, there are signs that, in the next few months, business will have to face up to the most formidable of business adversaries.

And that happens to be the government itself. Well, for one, this is an election year. We all know where our beloved politicos get their campaign funds.

If they can extort money from business, which they surely will, they will also do everything humanly possible to steal funds from their "pork" allocation.

* * *

At the same time, all the surveys continue to show that this cute administration of Gloriaetta is wilting in public support.

For the Palace, it is not just political pride that is at stake in the forthcoming elections, there's also the survival of Gloriaetta's presidency.

The boys of Gloriaetta, in another example of bad media gimmickry, pitted their boss against the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

Of course Wrist Band is still under house arrest, yet the Palace thinks that he presents a king-size political headache to Gloriaetta.

But what if, really, as the Palace boys declared in public, Wrist Band makes a comeback?

BREAKTIME/ B3

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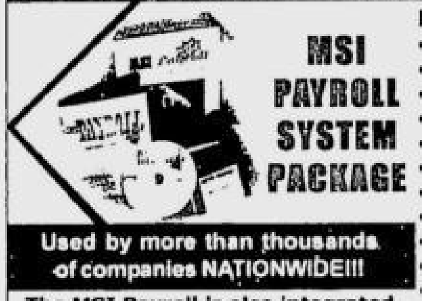

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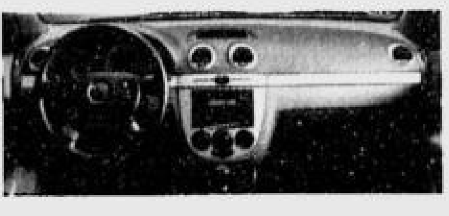

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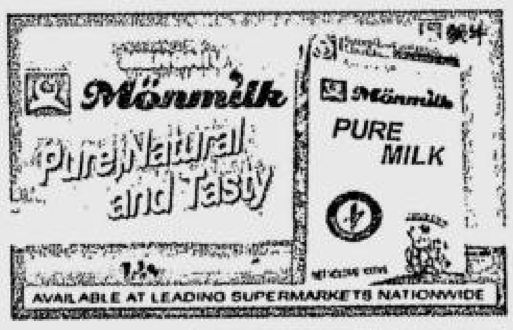
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Music can be both inspiration and distraction for fitness buffs

ALBANY, NEW YORK—RESEARCHERS are trying to find out if listening to music or watching TV while working out in the gym helps or harms exercisers.

"I've got it figured out," said Unruh, who moves to the beat of Van Halen and The Fray on her iPod. "Usually, every song lasts about four minutes. I run a mile in a little over eight. So if I can get through two songs, I know I'm a mile through my run."

Gyms are jammed with people like Unruh—the guy on the treadmill watching ESPN, the aerobic class bouncing to "Hollaback Girl," the spinner reading Self magazine. Words, images and especially songs can provide inspiration for exercisers, as well as a distraction from tedium and discomfort.

Unruh, director of wellness support at the Young Men's Christian Association of Metropolitan Atlanta, uses her songs-per-mile mind games as a way to keep engaged.

But are those distractions good or bad for exercisers? Researchers say it cuts both ways. Yes, a dose of video or audio can inspire better workouts. But distractions can also hurt performance. In a way, music can add some static to the mind-body connection.

Since the dawn of the Walkman, headphones have been as important as sneakers to many exercisers. Jacqueline Wojtusik, an Albany-area fashion designer who wears headphones for her regular workouts, listens to disco, '80s dance, electronic—anything as long as it has a fast beat.

"If it has a higher beat per minute," she said, "then I tend to stay with that beat."

Science is on her side.

Scientific proof

In a 2005 study, British researchers put 18 undergraduates on stationary bicycles to pedal either to silence or to "popular electronic dance music" on headphones. Participants worked about 13 percent harder to the up-tempo music compared to silence. One of the researchers, Sam Carr, suggested in an e-mail interview that music competed with exercisers' awareness of how hard they were breathing, or how much their legs ached.

Psychologists sometimes use the phrase "dissociation effect" to describe distractions like music and television, and they have found they can have other benefits.

Dr. James Annesi, a health psychologist who works at the same Atlanta YMCA as Unruh, found that novice exercisers given a choice between TV and music were more apt to stick with an exercise program than those told to focus only on their exertions or people limited to one type of media.

"The more dissociation the better, the more we can distance the people from their discomfort," he said.

Still, athletes digging deep for peak performance would do well to ditch the headphones and focus on their bodies. Studies had shown that the more distracted the athlete, the slower the times, said Ohio University psychology professor Benjamin Ogles.

"If you want to maintain a high level of intensity, you pretty much have to focus on your body," he said.

Disrupting the flow

This is related to the belief that noisy gadgets interfere with the intensely focused mental state many athletes refer to as "flow." For instance, visitors to the Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, are encouraged to leave the headphones behind. Jennifer Young, director of healthy living programs, said she wanted to keep visitors' mind-body connections strong.

Hikers at Kripalu are coached to "scan" their bodies by concentrating sequentially on their ankles, hips, shoulders and so on. Even during weightlifting—an activity linked more to Metallica than meditation—people are asked to visualize what their muscles are doing, or to focus on their breathing.

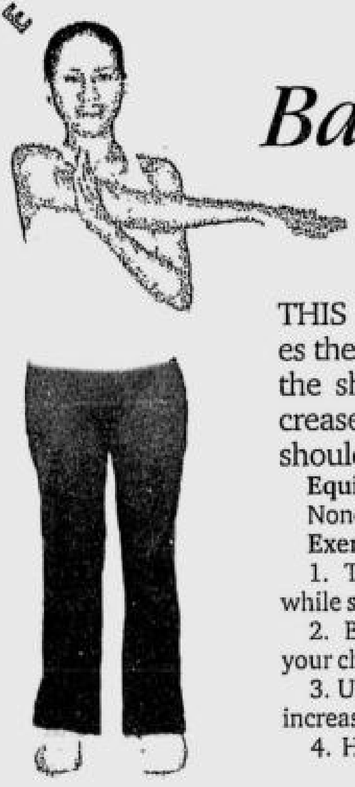
Even Anna Fyodorova, a triathlete from New York City who calls the iPod one of the "greatest creations made" for training, sees its limits. When other runners wore their ear buds during a recent 60-km race, she decided against it.

"When you're racing, you have to concentrate," she said. "You have to be totally in the moment." *AP*

CLIP & SAVE

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Back of the shoulder stretch



THIS EXERCISE STRETCHES the muscles at the back of the shoulder as well as increases flexibility of the shoulder joint.

Equipment:
None

Exercise technique:

1. This exercise can be done while standing or sitting.
2. Bring your left arm across your chest as far as you can.
3. Use your right hand to gently increase the stretch.
4. Hold for the desired length of time.
5. Repeat on the other side.

Performance tips:

1. Stretch only to the point of mild tension in the muscle, not to the point of pain.
2. Keep your shoulders facing front. Avoid rotating at the waist.
3. Remember to breathe normally as you hold the stretch.
4. To increase the stretch even more, bend your left elbow and use your right hand to push your arm backward gently.

Repetitions:
Hold for 10-30 seconds.

WELL AND GOOD
Tina Juan

Larks and owls as exercisers

IF YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO stick to your exercise program, a morning workout may be just what you need.

Researchers at the University of North Texas discovered that the most consistent exercisers work out in the morning. Head researcher David Hill says morning exercisers are more likely to stick to their workouts compared to people who exercise in the afternoon or evening.

Exercising first thing in the morning means it is less likely that a busy schedule will interfere with your good intentions. As the day goes on, many obstacles can pop up to derail you—an unexpected meeting, fatigue or traffic.

Larks and owls

Sleep experts categorize people as larks or owls. Larks are people who are at their mental and physical peak in the morning. Owls are the opposite. They are at their best at night.

Theoretically, a morning person should have no problem working out in the early hours of the day because their bodies are innately geared for action at that time.

I say "theoretically" because the motivation to exercise is more complicated than that. But if a morning person has a genuine desire to work out, part of the battle is already won because he/she is not handicapped by having to fight against his/her natural biorhythm.

The owls or evening people are those who really find it hard to exercise in the morning. I should know because I am an owl and I have been teaching an early morning exercise class for 17 years.

It has not been easy but it has definitely been worth it and it is definitely possible. My day is more productive, time-efficient and full of energy.

Of course, there are mornings when I wish I haven't committed to such an early time but I have never regretted my decision because I feel totally empowered after the class.

If I didn't exercise that early, it would take me half the morning to really start revving up my engines. And, of course, I would end up sleeping at midnight or later, which would just make my owlish tendencies even worse.

The two biggest problems that owls face are being unable to sleep early and feeling sluggish when they wake up.

But you can train your body to exercise in the morning as long as you do it on a regular basis. Hill says, "Our bodies' rhythms are inborn, but we reset them every day when our alarm goes off, when we eat our meals and when we exercise."

Tips

The following tips are for owls who want to exercise in the morning and need an extra push to get them going:

Sleep early.

This is the catch-22 of exercising in the morning—you need to sleep early to be able to wake up halfway cheerfully but you have a hard time sleeping early because it is against your nature. You need a little discipline to stick to your required bedtime.

- Dim the bedroom lights a few hours before you sleep. The body responds to darkness by getting sleepy and to light by waking up. Experts recommend that people with severe sleep problems should not turn on the lights if they have to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night. A small night light is more conducive to going back to bed.
- Do not read or watch anything that stimulates your nervous system. If you watch an action movie, don't be surprised if you don't get sleepy right away.
- Worry and anxiety can keep you up like nothing else can. Do what you have to do to reduce stress. Some people play soft New Age type of music and use relaxation techniques like controlled breathing.

I find that a heart-to-heart talk with God followed by counting backward from 100 usually does the trick.

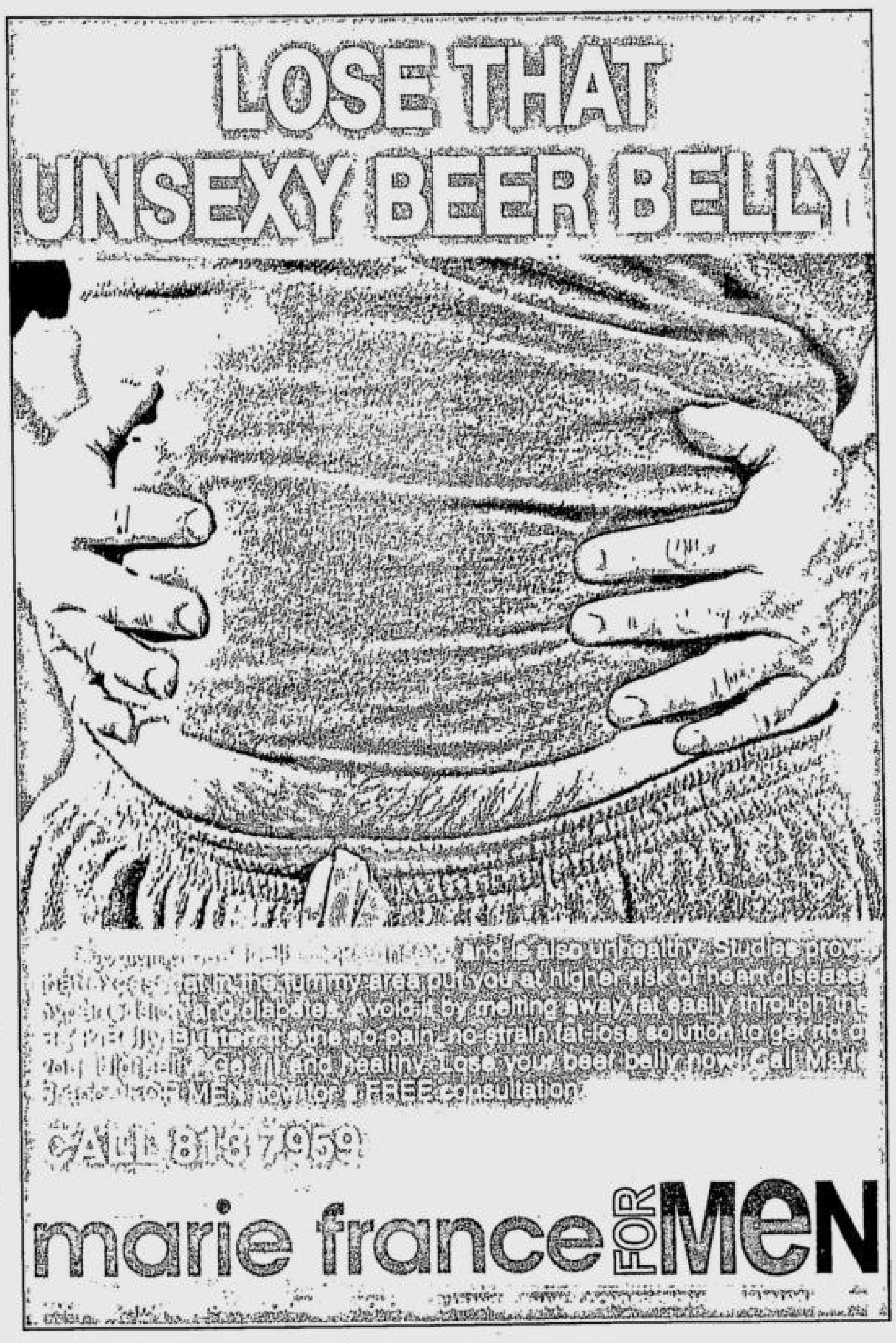
- Do not take coffee, cola or tea (anything with caffeine) less than six hours before bedtime. Alcohol and nicotine can also disturb your sleeping pattern.
- Don't do paperwork in bed thinking you can get a head start the next day. Work-related thoughts may keep you up at night. Both your body and your mind need time to unwind before going to sleep.

Prepare.

Prepare your workout and office clothes, as well as your office paperwork, the night before. Mornings are not the best time for owls to think clearly. You will be so stressed out looking for your stuff that you will end up using it as an excuse not to exercise. Besides, preparing your things at night is a psychological tool that convinces your mind and body that you are really going to do that early morning workout.

Note: Yoga Manila-Alabang will hold Yoga Trance Dance with Teresa Herrera at 7 p.m. today. Call 0917-522-YOGA (9642).

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info


LOSE THAT UNSEXY BEER BELLY
[illegible] and is also unhealthy. Studies prov[illegible] fat in the tummy area put you at higher risk of heart disease and diabetes. Avoid it by melting away fat easily through the [illegible] But here's the no-pain-no-strain fat-loss solution to get rid of [illegible] Get fit and healthy. Lose your beer belly now! Call Marie France FOR MEN now for a FREE consultation.
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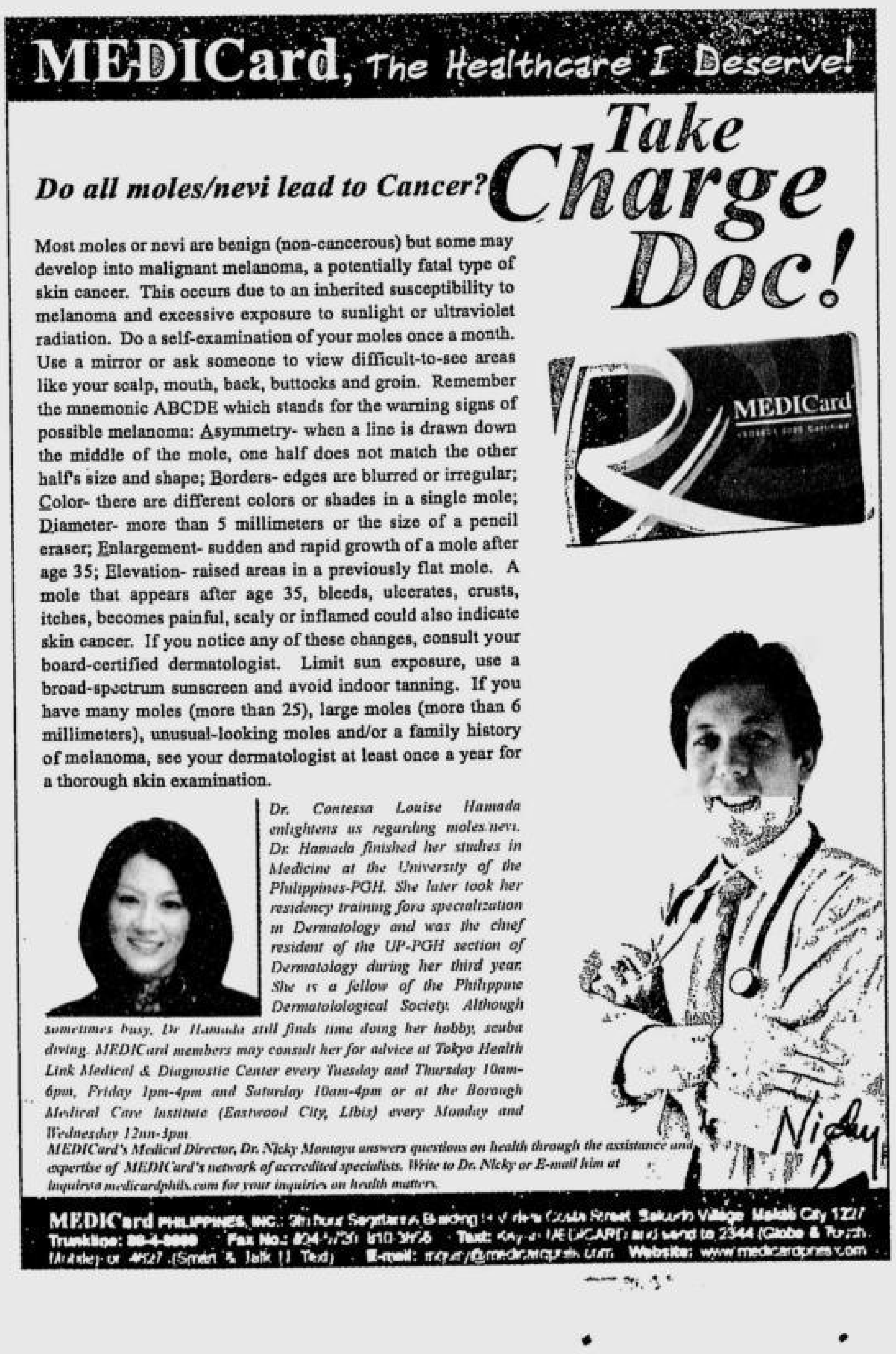
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Do all moles/nevi lead to Cancer?
Most moles or nevi are benign (non-cancerous) but some may develop into malignant melanoma, a potentially fatal type of skin cancer. This occurs due to an inherited susceptibility to melanoma and excessive exposure to sunlight or ultraviolet radiation. Do a self-examination of your moles once a month. Use a mirror or ask someone to view difficult-to-see areas like your scalp, mouth, back, buttocks and groin. Remember the mnemonic ABCDE which stands for the warning signs of possible melanoma: Asymmetry- when a line is drawn down the middle of the mole, one half does not match the other half's size and shape; Borders- edges are blurred or irregular; Color- there are different colors or shades in a single mole; Diameter- more than 5 millimeters or the size of a pencil eraser; Enlargement- sudden and rapid growth of a mole after age 35; Elevation- raised areas in a previously flat mole. A mole that appears after age 35, bleeds, ulcerates, crusts, itches, becomes painful, scaly or inflamed could also indicate skin cancer. If you notice any of these changes, consult your board-certified dermatologist. Limit sun exposure, use a broad-spectrum sunscreen and avoid indoor tanning. If you have many moles (more than 25), large moles (more than 6 millimeters), unusual-looking moles and/or a family history of melanoma, see your dermatologist at least once a year for a thorough skin examination.
Dr. Contessa Louise Hamada enlightens us regarding moles/nevi. Dr. Hamada finished her studies in Medicine at the University of the Philippines-PGH. She later took her residency training for a specialization in Dermatology and was the chief resident of the UP-PGH section of Dermatology during her third year. She is a fellow of the Philippine Dermatological Society. Although sometimes busy, Dr. Hamada still finds time doing her hobby, scuba diving. MEDICard members may consult her for advice at Tokyo Health Link Medical & Diagnostic Center every Tuesday and Thursday 10am-6pm, Friday 1pm-4pm and Saturday 10am-4pm or at the Borough Medical Care Institute (Eastwood City, Libis) every Monday and Wednesday 12nn-3pm.
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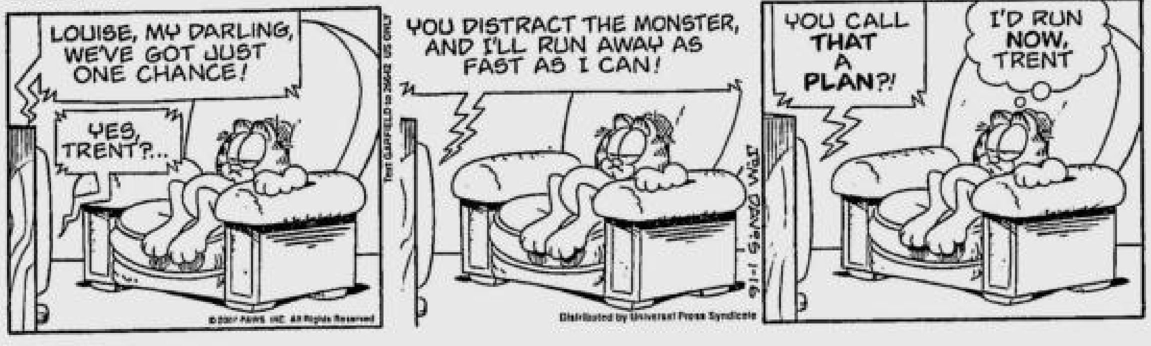
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


LOUISE, MY DARLING, WE'VE GOT JUST ONE CHANCE!
YES, TRENT?...
YOU DISTRACT THE MONSTER, AND I'LL RUN AWAY AS FAST AS I CAN!
YOU CALL THAT A PLAN?!
I'D RUN NOW, TRENT
JIM DAVIS 1-16
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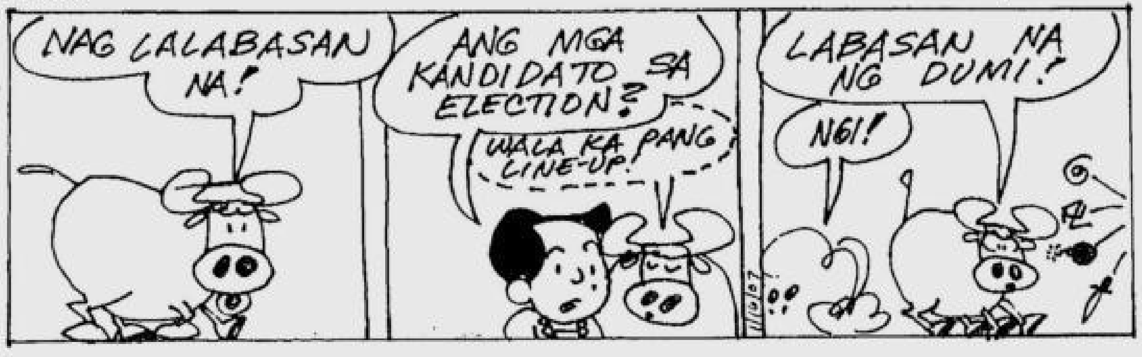
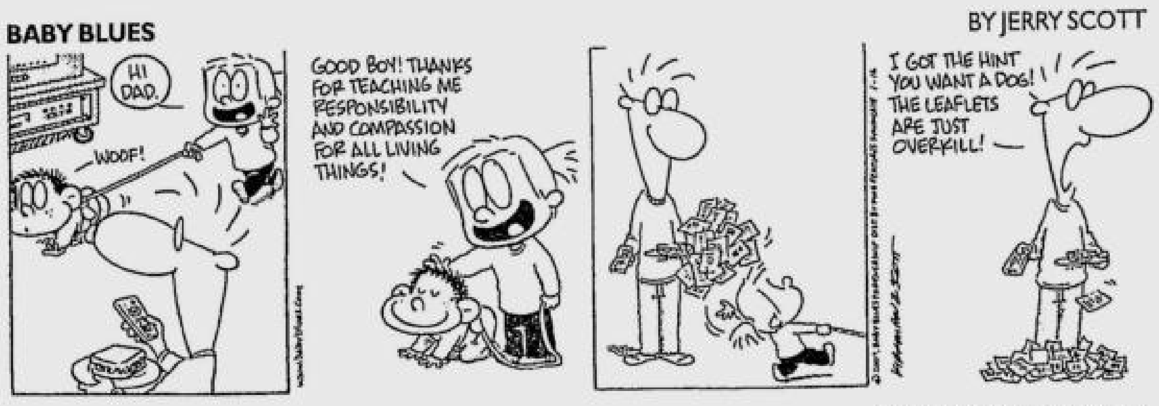
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAG LALABASAN NA!
ANG MGA KANDIDATO SA ELECTION?
WALA KA PANG LINE-UP!
LABASAN NA NG DUMI!
NGI!
1/10/07

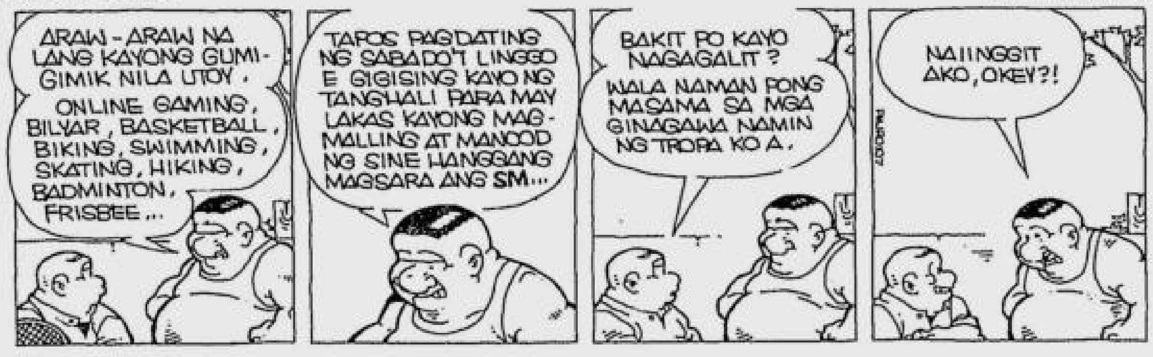
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI DAD.
WOOF!
GOOD BOY! THANKS FOR TEACHING ME RESPONSIBILITY AND COMPASSION FOR ALL LIVING THINGS!
I GOT THE HINT YOU WANT A DOG! THE LEAFLETS ARE JUST OVERKILL!

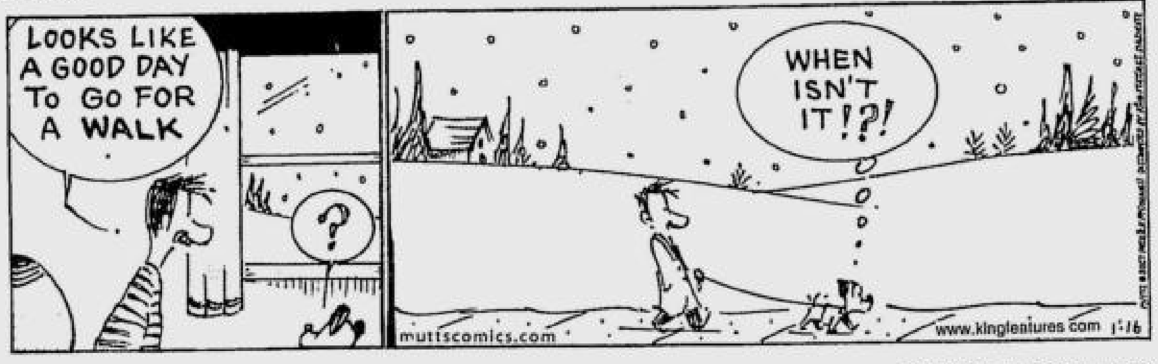
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ARAW-ARAW NA LANG KAYONG GUMI-GIMIK NILA UTOY. ONLINE GAMING, BILYAR, BASKETBALL, BIKING, SWIMMING, SKATING, HIKING, BADMINTON, FRISBEE...
TAPOS PAGDATING NG SABADO'T LINGGO E GIGISING KAYO NG TANGHALI PARA MAY LAKAS KAYONG MAG-MALLING AT MANOOD NG SINE HANGGANG MAGSARA ANG SM...
BAKIT PO KAYO NAGAGALIT? WALA NAMAN PONG MASAMA SA MGA GINAGAWA NAMIN NG TROPA KO A.
NAIINGGIT AKO, OKEY?!

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LOOKS LIKE A GOOD DAY TO GO FOR A WALK
?
WHEN ISN'T IT!?!
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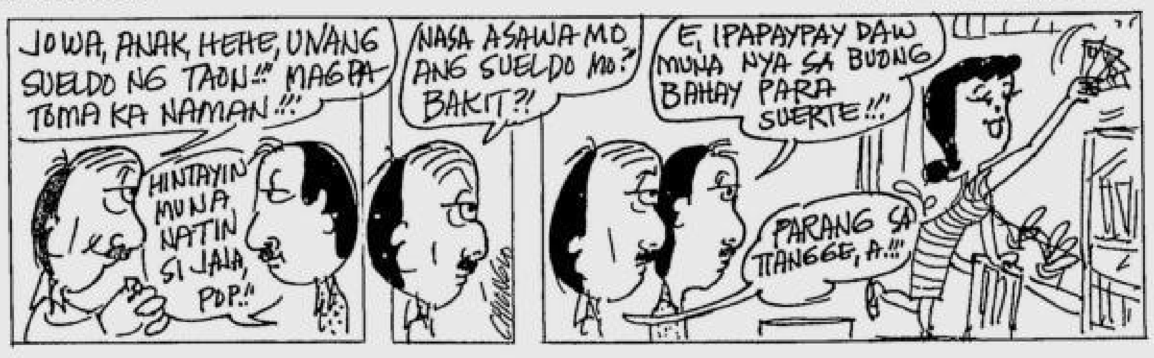
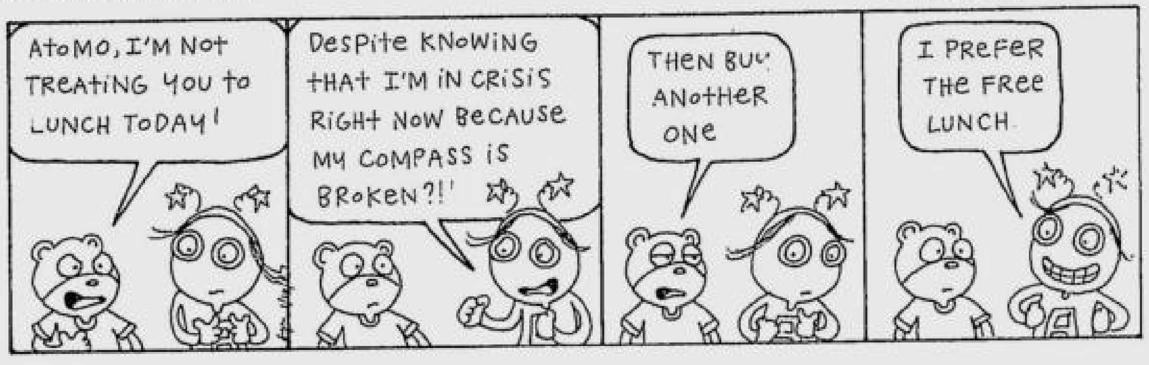
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, ANAK, HEHE, UNANG SUELDO NG TAON!!! MAGPA TOMA KA NAMAN!!!
HINTAYIN MUNA NATIN SI JALA, POP!
NASA ASAWA MO ANG SUELDO MO?! BAKIT?!
E, IPAPAYPAY DAW MUNA NYA SA BUONG BAHAY PARA SUERTE!!!
PARANG SA TIANGGE, A.!!!
CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

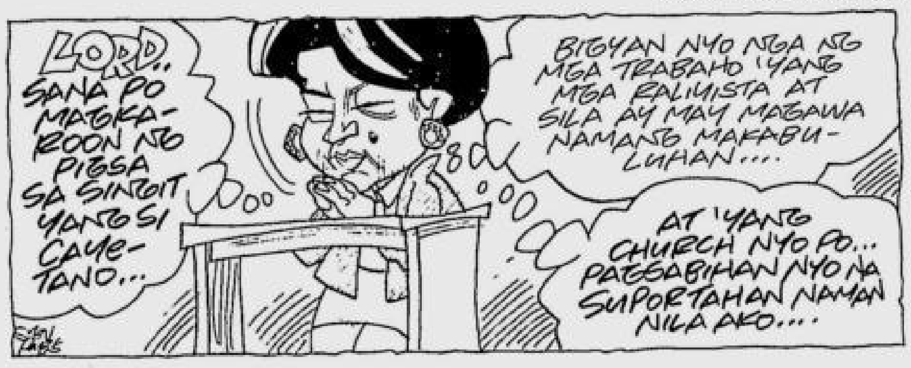
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AtoMo, I'M Not TReatiNG You to LUNCH TODAY!
Despite KNoWiNG that I'M iN CRiSiS RiGht Now Because MY COMPASS is BRoKeN?!
Then Buy Another one
I PreFer The Free LUNCH

DIVINE COMEDY

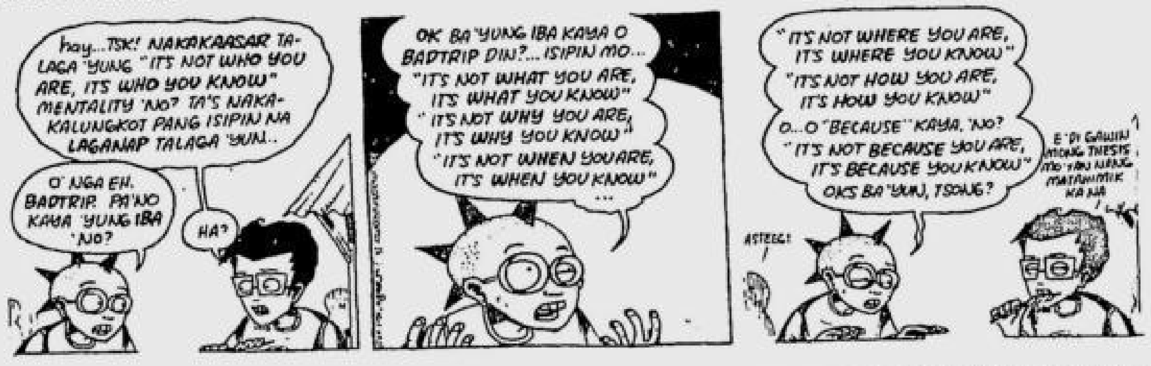
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU


LORD.. SANA PO MAGKA-ROON NG PIGSA SA SINGIT YANG SI CAYE-TANO...
BIGYAN NYO NGA NG MGA TRABAHO 'YANG MGA RALIYISTA AT SILA AY MAY MAGAWA NAMANG MAKABU-LUHAN....
AT 'YANG CHURCH NYO PO... PAGSABIHAN NYO NA SUPORTAHAN NAMAN NILA AKO....

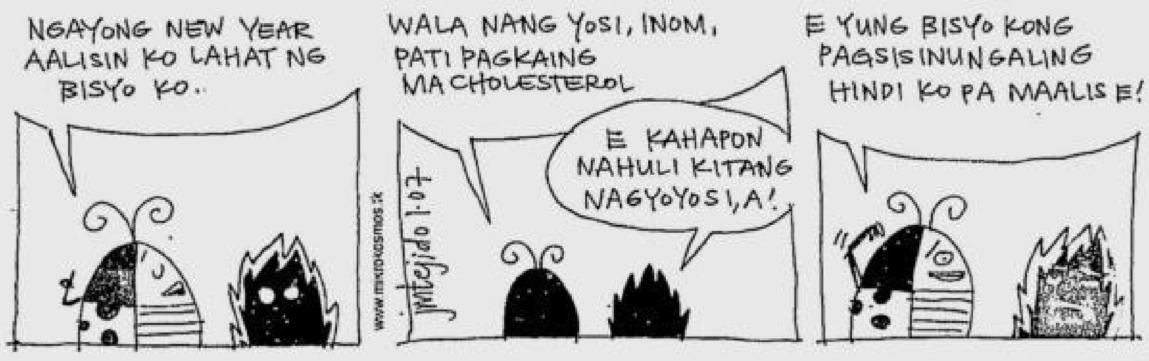
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


hay...TSK! NAKAKAASAR TALAGA 'YUNG "IT'S NOT WHO YOU ARE, ITS WHO YOU KNOW" MENTALITY 'NO? TA'S NAKA-KALUNGKOT PANG ISIPIN NA LAGANAP TALAGA 'YUN..
O' NGA EH. BADTRIP. PA'NO KAYA 'YUNG IBA 'NO?
HA?
OK BA 'YUNG IBA KAYA O BADTRIP DIN?... ISIPIN MO... "IT'S NOT WHAT YOU ARE, ITS WHAT YOU KNOW" "ITS NOT WHY YOU ARE, ITS WHY YOU KNOW" "IT'S NOT WHEN YOU ARE, ITS WHEN YOU KNOW"...
"IT'S NOT WHERE YOU ARE, ITS WHERE YOU KNOW" "ITS NOT HOW YOU ARE, ITS HOW YOU KNOW" O...O "BECAUSE" KAYA, 'NO? "IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU ARE, IT'S BECAUSE YOU KNOW" OKS BA 'YUN, TSONG?
E 'DI GAWIN MONG THESIS MO 'YAN NANG MATAHIMIK KA NA
ASTEEG!

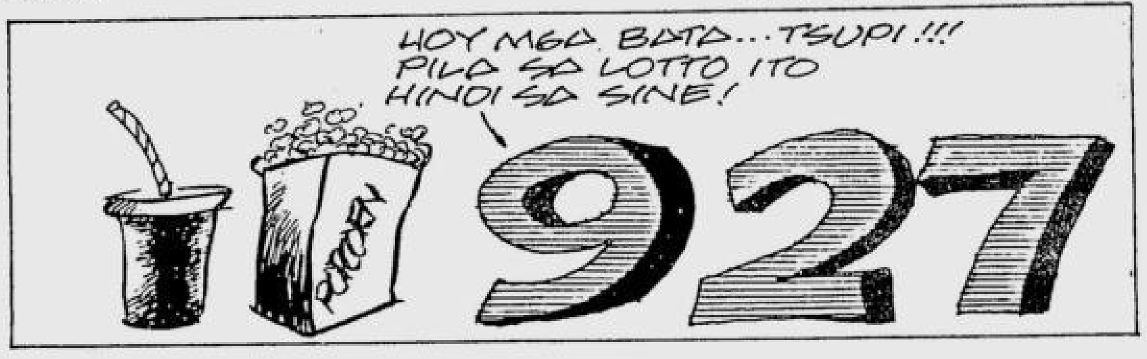
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NGAYONG NEW YEAR AALISIN KO LAHAT NG BISYO KO..
WALA NANG YOSI, INOM, PATI PAGKAING MA CHOLESTEROL
E KAHAPON NAHULI KITANG NAGYOYOSI, A!
E YUNG BISYO KONG PAGSISINUNGALING HINDI KO PA MAALIS E!
www.mikrokosmos.tk
jmtejido 1.07

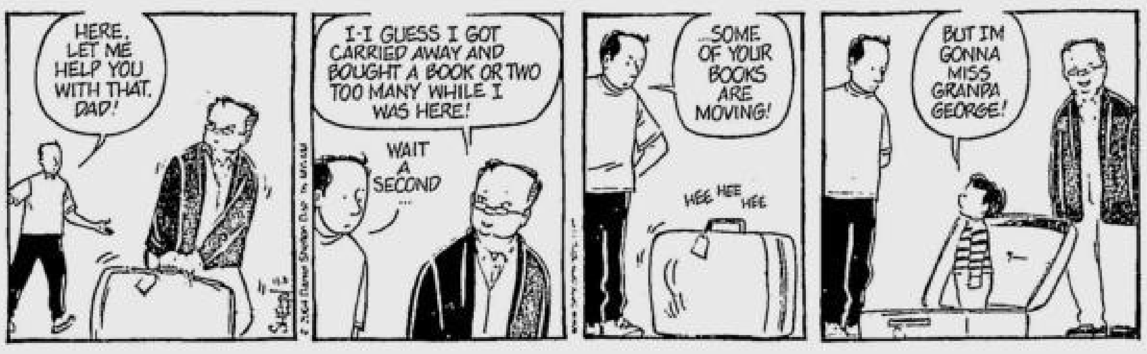
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

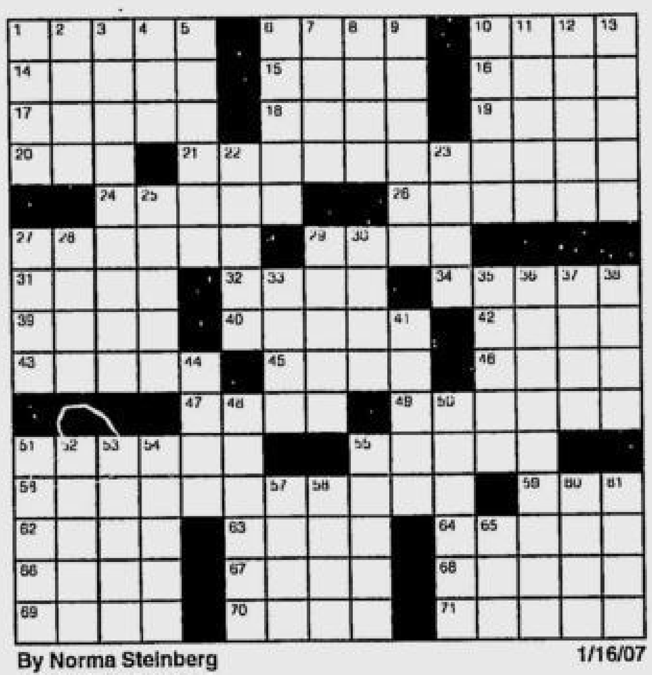

HOY MGA BATA... TSUPI!!! PILA SA LOTTO ITO HINDI SA SINE!
POPCORN
927

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE, LET ME HELP YOU WITH THAT, DAD!
I-I GUESS I GOT CARRIED AWAY AND BOUGHT A BOOK OR TWO TOO MANY WHILE I WAS HERE!
WAIT A SECOND ...
...SOME OF YOUR BOOKS ARE MOVING!
HEE HEE HEE
BUT I'M GONNA MISS GRANPA GEORGE!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

1/16/07

ACROSS
1 Ocean motions
6 SFPD alerts
10 Clothes
14 Fully grown
15 Bombard
16 Olfactory trigger
17 Comic O'Donnell
18 Carpeting measurement
19 Forum robe
20 Key near Ctrl
21 Transistor's ancestors
24 Thaw
26 Documents
27 Quick-witted
29 History
31 Etna's outpouring
32 Malevolent
34 Flaming felony
39 Surrounded by
40 Tortilla chip dip
42 Shade of beige
43 __ by comparison
45 Workshop item
46 Tough journey
47 Parasite's target
49 Examine
51 Fashioner
55 Pulsate
56 No ironing
59 Sty resident
62 Paquin of "The Squid and the Whale"
63 Opera melody
64 Stage whisper
66 Shoe points
67 College period
68 Frisco NFL player
69 Add to the payroll
70 Rams' mates
71 Fantasy

DOWN
1 Scarlett's place
2 Object of devotion
3 Tiny tornado
4 Wallach of "The Magnificent Seven"
5 Wonder of music
6 With speed
7 Andean nation
8 Cordon __
9 Postal purchase
10 Arose
11 Sun-dried brick
12 Critic Ebert
13 Word with band or ring
22 Land units
23 Bye-bye!
25 Get around
27 Applaud
28 Himalayan mystic
29 Steer
30 As well
33 Huge containers
35 Old as new again
36 Straggly tree
37 Assayer's samples
38 Pop in the microwave
41 First in a series
44 Mets' stadium
48 Flowery
50 To-do list entry
51 Path of a mower
52 Capital of Vietnam
53 "Lou Grant" star
54 Stage
55 Squads
57 Detective Nancy
58 Telegram
60 Whose __ was this?
61 Microbe
65 Titled Brit

Monday's Puzzle Solved

R	A	T	E	S	■	S	H	E	L	F	■	P	O	T
E	D	I	T	H	■	H	O	V	E	R	■	O	R	O
V	A	S	C	O	D	A	G	A	M	A	■	N	A	M
■	■	■	H	E	E	D	■	M	O	N	O	C	L	E
M	A	H	I	■	S	E	D	A	N	■	D	E	S	I
O	W	E	N	■	E	D	E	R	■	A	D	D	■	■
R	A	N	G	E	R	■	A	I	R	S	■	E	R	R
O	R	R	■	O	V	E	R	E	A	T	■	L	E	E
N	E	Y	■	N	E	S	S	■	C	A	M	E	I	N
■	■	H	A	S	■	T	I	L	E	■	A	O	N	E
S	H	U	T	■	D	O	R	I	C	■	G	N	A	W
W	A	D	E	S	I	N	■	K	A	L	I	■	■	■
A	D	S	■	L	E	I	F	E	R	I	C	S	O	N
M	O	O	■	A	G	A	I	N	■	M	A	R	C	O
I	N	N	■	G	O	N	G	S	■	B	L	I	S	S

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HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have tremendous energy and focus. When you know what you want, you go after it! You're reliable and diligent. You're aware that you need to feel satisfied with your efforts because self-respect is important to you. New projects and new challenges always excite you. You have much to look forward to this year. It could be one of the best years of your life!
Birthdate of: Ronnie Milsap, country singer; A.J. Foyt, race-car driver; Sade, singer

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your ambition is strong for the next six weeks. Be advised that your aggression might threaten your boss. (Oops.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Try to do something about your increasing urge to travel or get more education in the next few months. The bottom line is simply this: You want to expand your world!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Conflict about inheritances or shared property could arise in the near future. You're so clever with words; you'll be able to handle this diplomatically.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today Mars moves opposite your sign, where it will stay until the end of February. This indicates that conflict with partners and close friends is likely.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Not only do you have increasing energy to work hard and to get better organized, you have the motivation as well. This is all you need to do the job. Get down to it!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're working hard and dealing with a time of transition. That's why a planetary change today that helps you to be playful and prankish is good news!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Conflict at home in the next few weeks is likely due to renovations, redecorating, moving or visiting guests. Be patient with family members.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your communication skills are hot now and in the next few weeks. Writing, reading, studying and talking to anyone about anything will be quite successful.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're very keen to earn money now (and spend it as well). You're full of good ideas, and some of them just might pay off. Good luck!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Mars is in your sign until March. This gives you increased energy and aggression. On the whole it's a good thing, but if you start coming on too strong, get physical exercise to burn off some of this steam.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Four planets are in your sign, giving you strength and improved social skills. Make the most of this. Talk to people about what you want to get or achieve.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Conflict with a friend is likely. Work behind the scenes as much as possible. Don't go looking for a fight. Who needs it?

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		2		9		1		
			8	2	6			
8								3
	4		9		5		6	
2	3						5	8
	7		2		4		3	
6								4
			7	6	2			
		7		1		2		

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/16

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

2	9	5	1	7	4	8	6	3
4	1	6	9	3	8	7	5	2
8	7	3	5	2	6	1	9	4
1	4	2	6	5	7	9	3	8
3	5	8	4	1	9	6	2	7
9	6	7	3	8	2	5	4	1
6	3	9	7	4	1	2	8	5
7	8	4	2	6	5	3	1	9
5	2	1	8	9	3	4	7	6

Difficulty Level ★

MARILOU Gordon, Entang Carballo, Carmen Lim, Sebi Santos, Lucille Villanueva and Daisy Payumo

DELY Yap, Lucy Enriquez, Lil Dominguez and Fedel Alfonso

VICKY Cantada, Malou Veloso and Chit Marty

SAY CHEESE. Tess Castro, Maricar Sobrepena, Tess Kabigting, Baby de Jesus and Annabelle Adriano

CHARLIE Alindada and wife, Caroline A.

RORY Carreon and Maur Lichauco

MITSI and Stanly Perez

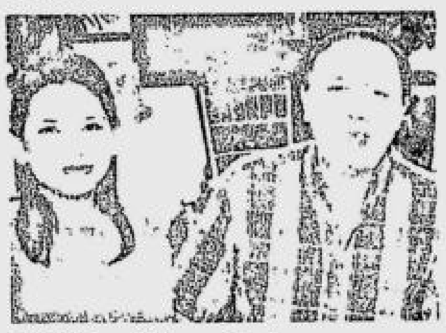
Fundraiser's fundraising birthday

NET Vizconde with adorable Chit Salud

BETTINA Lopez Osmeña

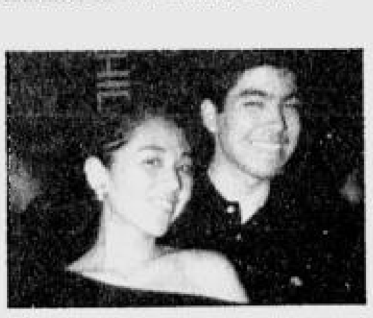
SEN. Serge Osmeña

ANN Zitoni


MILLET and Johnny Carlos

THREE'S not a crowd for Carmi Tanjutco, Paolo Panelo and Jamie Caverete

DJ Manolet Dario, Kat Arambulo, Ivan Zalameda and Chicho Suarez


KATHLEEN Cruz and JR Maniego

EYECATCHER
Micah Seng

DUNHILL'S Carlo Zaldarriaga with Ernest Buan and Derrick Villarino

BIRTHDAY lady Tessie Amparo with daughters Carina Amparo and Kinny Salas. Standing: Junie Amparo and host, mega businessman Felix Amparo

LG PHILIPPINES president Jeff Hong; Kristine Hermosa; Joey Uy, Telecoms Concept Inc. CEO; and Jasper Yeng of TCI

SUPER LADY AND EYE-CATCHING fashion plate **Tessie Amparo**, who is involved in different fundraisers for several charitable institutions, was the happiest Queen for a Day during her fun birthday bash at the Turf Room of the chi-chi Manila Polo Club, *palanggas*.

It was also a fundraiser for **Michael Angelo Lobrin**, a seminarian at the San Carlos Seminary.

The day like this, which was "for a cause" no less, had tons of Cosmo Manille's hot namedroppables breezing in endlessly, dahlings.

Father **Noel** celebrated the Mass that started the affair. After dinner, the invitees were entertained by award-winning singer **Alexie Edralin**, who sang romantic Philippine classics and Broadway hits.

But the grand surprise of the evening was dashing former Solicitor General **Frank Chavez**, who gallantly accommodated the celebrator's request and sang a few songs in his inimitable style that left the normally sophisticated women of the lunch and dinner bunch swooning and begging for more, more, more!

Well, *palanggas*, like the true southern gentleman that he is, Frank C. obliged, *natch*!

Sensing

"The soothing calm of an ocean breeze. The invigorating rush of a winter chill. The pure pleasure of indulging in lush opulence."

These, *moi* was told, were the three distinct types of refreshment offered by Dunhill Senses, *palanggas*.

So I was completely enfolded in a stunning feast for the senses inside the NBC Tent where the House of Dunhill launched their latest products, dahlings.

The first to be introduced was the mellow taste of Flow. Rippling water was projected on the screens that lined the walls of the tent while dancers gracefully moved on stage.

We sampled Flow's mild tobacco taste with a touch of mint and a hint of citrus.

The backdrop then changed to falling leaves as the ballet dancers ushered in Luxe. This suggested warm spice, tangerine and also the slightest hint of mint.

Cool, cool air with a scent of mint then filled the Tent giving us a bit of a chill as we entered winter wonderland for the introduction of Frost.

Vivacious television host **Sam Oh** led us, guests, to the three lounges of Frost, Flow and Luxe, where we dug into special dishes and drinks corresponding to each of the products.

And you know what? The senses truly came alive that night, *palanggas*.

Chocoholic's phone

LG Mobile Philippines has brought the hottest mobile device to our shores, *palanggas*. The KG800, which also goes by the delicious name "LG Chocolate," is loaded with hot features all packaged within a smooth slider design, dahlings.

The fab launch was held at the—yeah, you guessed it—Embassy. Titled "Dark Desire," the event was attended by hot, hot LG Mobile executives both from abroad and the Philippines, leading figures in the telecom industry, the corporate world, Telecom Concept Inc. officers, regular party animals and celebrities.

The beautiful **Angel Jacob**, no less, dahlings, hosted the event.

Several lucky guests were awarded the LG Chocolate Phone like **Angel Aquino** of "Us Girls"; **Lyn Ching** of GMA 7; statuesque **Myrza Sison** of Summit Publications; **Sari Yap** of Lifestyle Asia/MMPI; actress **Kristine Hermosa**; and KC, Colby and **Troy Montero**.

A week earlier, *palanggas*, other style icons and media personalities were also awarded the Chocolate Phone during lunch at Max Brenner, the only chocolate resto in the city. *Moi* and **Tim Yap** of the INQUIRER, *natch*; **Grace Glory Go** and fashion plate **Joanne Ramirez** of the Star; and guest host Angel Jacob were given the phones.

"The LG Chocolate Phone is a work of art—both in looks and features. With its sleek, ultra-thin minimalist style and silky smooth slide design, users will be lured in by Chocolate's glowing red touch-sensitive keypad," say the people behind the product.

The LG Chocolate Phone, named "Best Fashion Phone" at the Mobile Choice awards, has taken the global market by storm, selling an awesome more than one million units since its launch outside Korea, *palanggas*.

LG hotshot president and CEO **Jeff Hong** said it best: "We are looking forward to the Philippine success of the LG Chocolate Phone, as we aim to follow the worldwide trend of success this product has given LG Mobile on a global scale. It's the next generation in phone design."

Check it out! LG Chocolate is as delicious as it looks, dahlings.

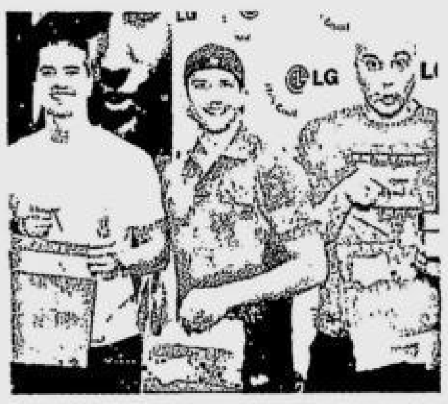
WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

BEN Valencia and Roe Quiambao of LG

JAMES Choi


MONTERO brothers. Troy, Colby and KC

Il Divo in Manila

Let the countdown begin, dahlings. Those gorgeous hunks collectively known as Il Divo will perform live at 8 p.m., Jan. 20, at the Plenary Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center, *palanggas*.

Thanks to Smart Infinity, as well as Sun Life Financial, Citibank and Rado Watches of Switzerland, Il Divo Live in Manila will definitely be the gala concert of the year, dahlings.

This fab group was among the "Sexiest Men Alive" identified in People Magazine's Nov. 26 issue. It has toured with the Diva of Divas, **Barbara Streisand**, no less, who called them the "four young, hot tenors."

Grab those tickets now, *palanggas*, since limited seats are available. Call 8919999, or Concertus at 8172431 and 8172617.

Get an exclusive 10-percent discount when you use your Citibank credit card to purchase your tickets through TicketWorld.

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

The fountain of youth and more

Part I

IT IS SAID, THAT 2,200 YEARS AGO, THE emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang who built the Great Wall, was in pursuit of a dream—to discover the elixir of youth.

He sent a 1,000-strong army of searchers to look for it in the east but their efforts were in vain.

Little did the good emperor know that the elixir that eluded him was already found. All he had to do was to study his food just a little bit better.

In another part of the globe, Cleopatra, who was so concerned about preserving her beauty, developed a regimen to ensure smoother skin and silkier hair. Fresh goat's milk was her favorite beauty product.

Empress Josephine, Napoleon's lady love, believed in the power of flowers to soothe a weary soul. She was famous for her love of roses and she accidentally discovered how to use rose oil for aromatherapy.

While there are numerous ways to enhance the body's ability to delay aging, we will focus on just a few.

As with any regimen that is effective, the process should have both internal and external effects.

Internal

Aging is a result of metabolic miscommunication, when the endocrinological messages from our master regulator glands do not reach their intended recipients—cells of our bodies.

Hormone deficiencies also contribute in a major way to energy decline, sagging skin/wrinkles, fat accumulation, slower brain function.

Hormones

The key hormones of the endocrine system are the human growth hormone (HEH), melatonin, thyroid hormone, insulin, DHEA, estrogen, testosterone, progesterone.

It is believed that a Swiss cocktail of amino acids rich in colostrum can delay aging. The latest in the market today, EN12 and EN23, are liquid sprays to be administered under the tongue twice a day.

They include Alpha 6C that stimulates growth hormone secretion; Gaba to ensure plasma hormone levels; L-Dopa Bean Extact, an HGH stimulant; glutamic acid for increased brain/mental functions; aspartic acid to detoxify the body and 14 other amino acids including arginine, lysine, methionine, niacin.

People on this regimen get an energy boost and have a more stable emotional state of mind, increased libido, faster recovery from illness. Call Mancao Myotheraphy Clinic (look for Dr. Chris Mancao) at 6876174.

Vitamin C

So much has been written about the potency of Vitamin C. More than an immune booster, it is called the skin vitamin.

When taken internally, it strengthens your body's ability to heal, wards off infection and disease and combats damage caused by destructive oxygen free radicals that can lead to aging.

Vitamin C, when directly applied on the skin, penetrates the tough epidermis and almost instantly lightens the complexion, reduces wrinkles and rejuvenates the skin.

Containing at least 90-percent Vitamin C, Godiva Vitamin C Serum is a non-irritating solution that promises visible results within weeks of regular use.

The good news is it is affordable compared to other foreign brands. Call Godiva Skin Center at 8909845 or e-mail info@godivaskincare.com.

Cell nutrient

Feeding the cells with the nutrients it requires can be a challenge to most people who simply eat to be satisfied.

What if there were an easily digestible cell food, taken like tea, which can guarantee you instant energy, better control of blood sugar levels, better skin quality, mental alertness and general well-being?

The role of a new and improved polysaccharide peptide in delaying the aging condition is now being recognized.

If monosaccharides are sweeping America because of their health benefits, how much more welcome would be a food supplement containing polysaccharides?

Call Enzacta, the natural food company at 3961864 and 0915-3625705 (look for Maris).

Win the war

"We're in a war. It's a life against death, and we're all in the killing zone of the aging process. To do nothing is to be wiped out."—Dr. Ward Dean, Life Magazine, October 1992

And so, if this is a war, then we must win it. And, I might add, let's do something about it now.

Dr. Chrystine Gonzalez of the Wellness Institute invites you to a wellness and detox therapy for liver and gallbladder cleansing on Jan. 20-21, overnight at the Discovery Suites. Call 6370497.

Love and light!

INNER AWARENESS
Jaime T. Licauco

Setting the record straight

Part 2

THIS IS THE CONTINUATION OF MY point-by-point reply to magician James Randi's reaction (see PDI, Dec. 12, 2006) to my column of Oct. 24, 2006.

4. Randi: "I have never said that Uri Geller was a 'fake psychic.' Geller never filed any harassment suit against me. In the one case he did file, he lost and had to pay $150,000 in sanctions."

He may not have called Geller a fake psychic, but he certainly hounded him for years, saying what Geller was doing was plain trickery that he could duplicate anytime.

Let me quote Dr. Broughton again (from the above mentioned book "Parapsychology"): "The research on Geller's alleged PK abilities has received severe criticism, primarily from James Randi and others with conjuring and sleight-of-hand experience. In fact, Randi has made something of a career as Geller's debunker, having risen from relative obscurity to national prominence through books and television appearances in which he claims to expose Geller's tricks. Randi and other critics claim that all scientists who observed Geller's demonstrations were simply duped by conjuring tricks."

As to the lawsuit Geller filed against Randi, my source was no less than Geller himself who personally told me that story in Düsseldorf, Germany, in 1994 during an international conference I attended where he was one of the speakers.

Either Geller was lying or I misheard what he said. But between Geller and Randi, whom should we believe?

5. I said in my article that "Randi heads a noisy group called the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) and publishes the Skeptical Inquirer, the main purpose of which is to show that those who believe in such things are nuts."

Randi: "Another lie. I have not been connected with CSICOP for more than a decade."

Maybe so, but he cannot deny that in the late '70s and throughout the '80s, he was the most visible and vocal spokesman of CSICOP—writing articles, appearing on television shows and many public forums representing CSICOP and denouncing believers in psychic phenomena as "irrationalists."

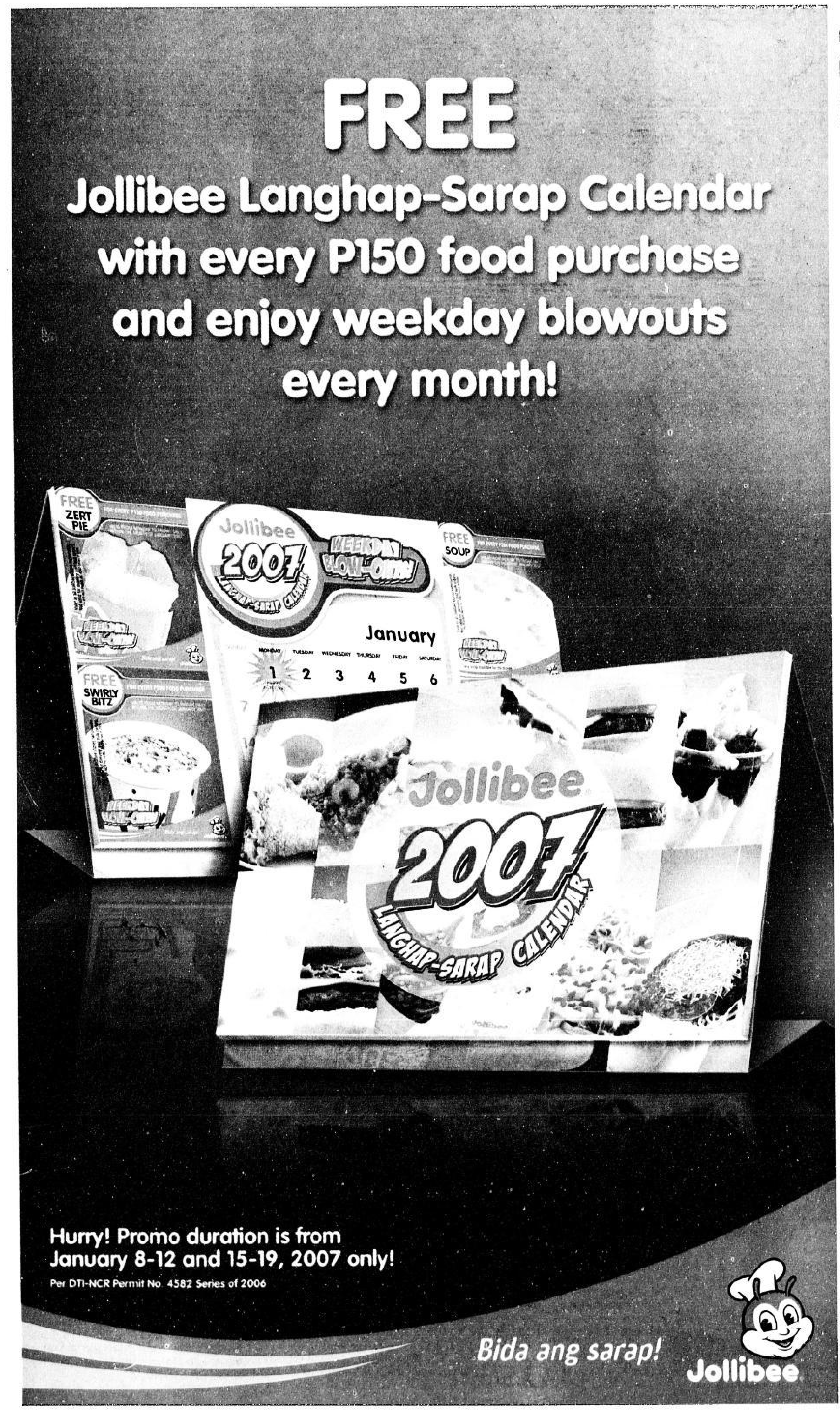
To quote Dr. Broughton again: "Probably one of CSICOP's best-known advocates is the magician James Randi. Born in Canada as Randell James Swinge, Randi achieved national exposure through his effort to debunk Israeli psychic Uri Geller."

Randi participated in the cover-up of a botched scientific investigation of Michel Gauquelin's conclusion that there was a significant statistical correlation between birth dates of athletes and the position of Mars in the heavens.

Randi's group denounced Gauquelin's finding only to eat their words later. To save face, they went so far as to manipulate scientific data to conform to their preconceived notion that astrology was pure hogwash.

Fate Magazine said in its September 1983 issue, "They call themselves the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. In fact, they are a group of would-be debunkers who bungled their major investigation, falsified the results, covered up their errors and gave the boot to a colleague (Dennis Rawlins) who threatened to tell the truth."

So much for the Amazing Randi and his Amazing Lies!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Jollibee Langhap-Sarap Calendar with every P150 food purchase and enjoy weekday blowouts every month!

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4582 Series of 2006

Bida ang sarap!
Jollibee

De-stress during coffee breaks

NESCAFÉ PROTECT COFFEE OFFERS SOME tips on how to use coffee breaks to reduce stress and promote good health.

Load up on antioxidants that are supposed to fight disease-causing oxygen free radicals and reduce visible signs of aging.

Take frequent breaks and try a mini-exercise of 1-2 minutes every hour. If you find yourself stationary for more than two hours, take a 3-5-minute break .

The following exercises from the University of Michigan Health System (www.med.umich.edu) can help you fight fatigue and improve your productivity. They also lower your risk of developing injuries that could mean costly absences.

Do each stretch or exercise three to five times before proceeding to the next one.

1. With one hand, bend the wrist on the other hand by pressing on the back of the hand and holding it down for 15-30 seconds. Afterwards, stretch the hand by pressing the fingers in a backward direction, holding them for 15-30 seconds. Repeat the stretch with the other hand.
2. While sitting, clasp the back of your head with both arms then slowly arch backward and look up to the ceiling.
3. Stand against a wall with your elbows and wrists against the wall then slowly slide your arms upward as high as you can while keeping your elbows and wrists against the wall.
4. Standing with your arms by your sides, squeeze your shoulder blades together and hold for five seconds.
5. Stand facing a corner with both arms on the wall slightly above your head. Slowly lean forward until you feel a stretch in the front of your shoulders. Hold 15-30 seconds.
6. Sitting in an upright position, clasp both hands behind your back, lower your left shoulder then gently tilt your head toward the right. Hold this position for 15-30 seconds before resuming the starting position then lower your right shoulder and tilt your head toward the left until you feel a stretch. Hold for 15-30 seconds.
7. Sitting in an upright position, put your right arm behind your back and gently grasp the right side of your head with your left hand to help tilt your head toward the left. You will feel a gentle stretch on your right side. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Switch and stretch the other side.

Power nap

A short 15-20 minute power nap can help improve productivity by elevating mood, lowering stress, and improving memory and learning.

Sleep comes in five progressive stages. Power napping only takes us to the first two stages, when optimal relaxation occurs. Several studies have shown that power nappers awake not just rested but also with measurably improved alertness and memory.

But going beyond the recommended 20 minutes takes your brain into deeper stages of sleep from which you typically awake feeling sluggish in mind and body unless you complete the whole five-stage sleep cycle. Be sure to set your alarm or have a friend wake you from your power nap.

You may try to boost the benefits of your power nap by drinking Nescafé Protect when you wake up. According to positivelycoffee.org, "two cups of coffee is all it takes to overcome fatigue and feel alert again."

Drinking coffee also helps improves performance when the level of alertness is low like when doing repetitive jobs.

Visit http://positivelycoffee.org.

ENTERTAINM
Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.p

AS EPONINE in "Les Miz" (London), 2000

Pinay shines in Europe

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Joanna Ampil has performed for Queen Elizabeth II, shared the stage with Judi Dench and sat on the lap of Christian Slater

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

"I'M JUST LUCKY, I GUESS," Joanna Ampil demurs when asked about her success.

Quite an understatement, really, because after the Filipino singer-actress debuted on the West End stage as Kim in "Miss Saigon" in 1993, she has starred in various musicals, sung on different recordings and appeared in diverse TV programs in the United States, United Kingdom and other European countries.

Apart from Kim, Ampil's other notable roles are Mary Magdalene in "Jesus Christ Superstar," Eponine and Fantine in "Les Misérables" and Mimi in "Rent."

By the end of the month, she will be reprising the role of Fantine, which she first played in 2003.

On top of her theater triumphs, she has also lent her soprano voice to cast recordings of "Miss Saigon" and "Jesus Christ Superstar," as well as "Stars of the Musicals" album.

Most recently, she recorded a special edition CD "Reach for the Stars," a song composed by Thomas Schönberg, with lyrics by Robert Vicencio. "Thomas is the son of ["Les Miz" and "Saigon" composer] Claude-Michel Schönberg."

While on a holiday in Sweden and right before starting rehearsals for "Les Miz," Ampil found the time to answer INQUIRER Entertainment's questions via e-mail.

As she expressed excitement over revisiting Fantine, she also recounted her "close" encounters with celebrities like Judi Dench, Christian Slater and the British royal family.

AS MARY Magdalene in "Jesus Christ Superstar" (London), 1996.

You'll miss Saigon
RECORD-BREAKING TEN YEARS
Miss Saigon
AT THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE
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AS KIM in "Miss Saigon" (London), 1999.

AS HERSELF in London

What was it like playing Fantine for the first time in 2003?

It was too good to be true. It was a real challenge because it was my first mature role. At first, I wasn't sure whether I could do it well. As it turned out, I had a pretty successful run as Fantine for two years.

How do you envision Fantine? What did you learn from her?

Fantine is very calm and dignified compared to Eponine who's very juvenile. I developed a certain serenity within me during my journey as Fantine.

What is it like reprising the role of Fantine?

I start rehearsing on Jan. 15. I am looking forward to it, of course. It's going to be a lot of fun as I already know a few people (in the show). I'm excited to revisit her story.

What is one of your favorite roles?

Each time I played Kim it was very fulfilling. I got to apply a lot of my personal hardships and happiness to the role, which made it more real not just for me but for the audience too. There's nothing worse than faking your emotions. Audiences aren't stupid. They can feel every connection you make with the character.

What's your most memorable performance so far?

It would have to be "Les Miz" during the *Entente Cordiale* in 2004. It was in celebration of the friendship between England and France, and among the dignitaries in the audience at Windsor Castle were Queen Elizabeth II and other members of the British royal family, President and Mrs. Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister and Mrs. Tony Blair. We met them after the private concert. That was out-of-this-world!

What's your latest project?

I'll be recording a solo album of songs from different musicals soon.

Tell us about your special CD single, "Reach for the Stars"?

It was originally written for a musical, of which I did the demo. Proceeds will go to a Manila orphanage called Sun and Moon Home for Children. The foundation has helped over 110 babies find homes and families all over the world. I've always been fond of babies. I nearly had one, which I had unfortunately lost.

What are your other dream roles?

I must've played all my dream roles and beyond! I tend to be realistic and I'm aware of my limitations. Being Asian makes it fairly difficult to win roles, but I've been quite blessed.

Is it difficult being an Asian in European theater?

Sure it is. The secret is not to expect anything. So that if something comes along, it's always a pleasant surprise. That's also how you remain grateful.

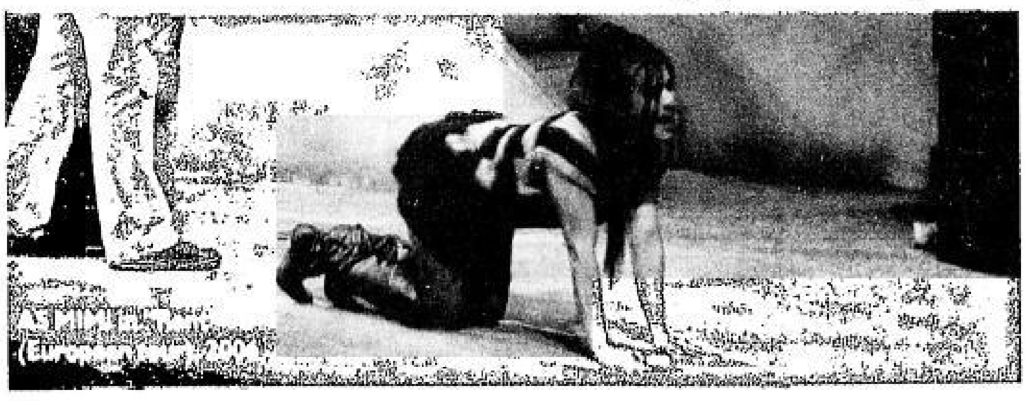
What have you learned from the different women you've played?

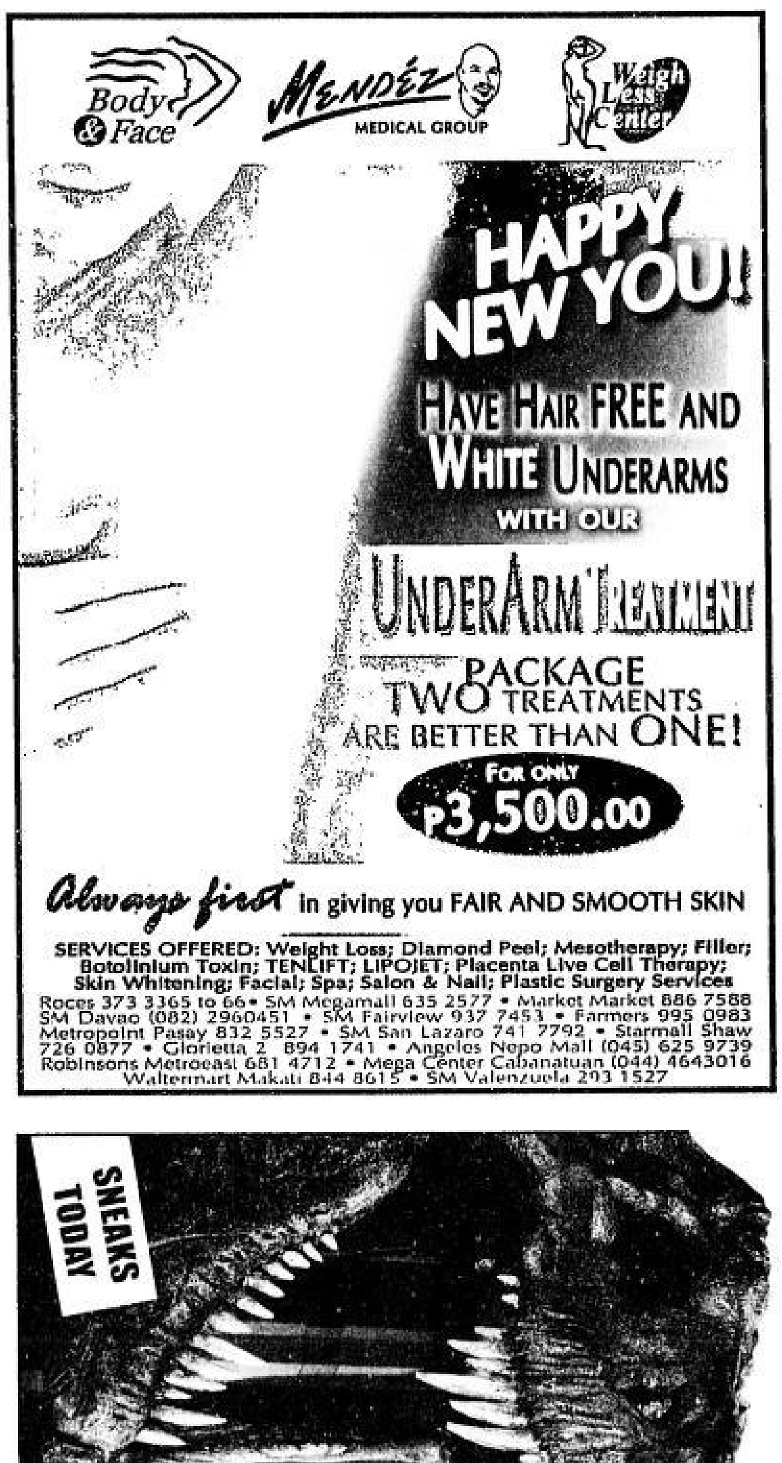
Well, I've mastered the art of playing a hooker! Just kidding. They all seem to be similar in the sense that they're all victims of circumstance. Still, they emerge as the heroines of their stories. My real-life drama is a mirror of this somehow. But I am not sure how I'll manage to become a heroine. I'm still trying to figure that out.

What was it like sharing the stage with Dame Judi Dench?

In 2004, she was doing the show "All's Well That Ends Well" next door to "Les Miz" and, while she was on a long break, she decided to join us in the barricade scene. How cool was

PINAY/ E2





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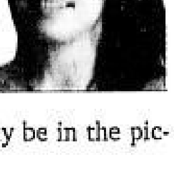
EVERYTHING COMES TO LIFE
OPENS JANUARY 24

Bad vibes within 'Wowowee'

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal



A NETWORK INSIDER TOLD ME MARIEL **Rodriguez** is no longer too happy with her stint in "Wowowee" that she might quit the show soon. Is she contemplating resignation for the same reasons that **Iya Villania** and **Kat Alano** did?

Lately, viewers are noticing that she seems disoriented while co-hosting the noontime show. I texted Mariel about it. Her reply: "Wowowee is my only show now, so why should I leave?"

In spite of the good ratings, is there really bad vibes permeating within "Wowowee" that's nothing to be wowed about?

First Christmas

LJ REYES was bubbling with joy when she told me about her first Christmas with BF **Alfred Vargas**. "We enjoyed being free just to be ourselves in the States. It was our first trip abroad together. We were like kids strolling around Disneyland. I gave him a pair of rubber shoes. He gave me a bag and a cute caricature of us."

At the (heart) rate they're going, a "miniature" LJ and Alfred will surely be in the picture someday soon.

Secret lovers

MARK Herras and **Katrina Halili** already sound like a broken record with their denials about romance brewing between them. But what's this I heard that they're sweet when nobody's looking? Maybe it's the thrill of being secret lovers that keeps them coming back for more.

Playing house

PBB housemate winner **Nene Tamayo** is now enjoying playing house with hubby **Anthony Plamio**. "I have no regrets about marrying at 25. I want to have a baby this year. Hopefully a boy, then a girl." But for now her "babies" are a morning show with **Jay Sonza** on NUTV and the soap "Amor Chico" in Cebu.

Extended run

DUE to insistent public demand, "Pedro Penduko" is extended for another season (every Saturday night after "TV Patrol World Sabado"). Aside from battling *aswangs, tikbalangs* and other strange creatures, Pedro (Matt Evans) is out to fight for his forbidden love for Hiyas (Melissa Ricks). Love is indeed war sometimes!

Troika

PASSION has decamped the matrimonial bed of a Pinoy mining engineer and his exotic young wife, who left India to live with him in Manila. Love remains but boredom now rules where the Kama Sutra once reigned.

The seven-year itch strikes when he leaves

BAD/ E2

> 'I've mastered the art of playing a hooker! These women I've played are all victims of circumstance. Still, they emerge as the heroines of their stories'

AS FANTINE in "Les Miz" (London), 2003

Pinay shines in Europe

From page E1

that?

We named her character Madame La Fage!

It was an eye-opener for me. I realized that she was human after all! Her hands were shaking and she admitted: "I'm nervous."

I was seated next to her and I was watching her every move. I wanted to give her a big hug, but that would've been too much.

Do you have other unforgettable celebrity encounters?

In 2004, when different West End theater companies mounted a Christmas party, we had Christian Slater as our Santa Claus. He was doing "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" at nearby Gielgud Theater then. At the party, I got to sit on Christian Slater's lap! That was fun!

What's the best review you've received so far?

It's from a fan named Judith who truly believes that listening to me sing heals her of her pain and illness.

Do you have plans of performing in the Philippines?

I'm still waiting and hoping. I've performed in some concerts, but not often enough. I'd love to do musicals, records, movies ... anything! My previous shows in Manila have been memorable. That makes me want to do more.

Bad vibes within . . .

From page E1

for a gold mining operation in Benguet. Her loneliness leads to a drunken dalliance with a stranger. Guilt-stricken, she follows him in Baguio. Then, they find themselves in a perverse sexual triangle. Such is the intriguing plot of Daven Productions' soon-to-be released movie "Troika," directed by Ihman Esturco.

Menage a trios a la Pinoy!

New year, new gadget

MY fave DJ during my teenage years was **Bambi Fonacier** (from the defunct KB89.1). I even cried when he resigned from radio.

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Vava Vhong

AS in James Bond movies, "Agent X44" has **Vhong Navarro** surrounded by an ar-

BAD/ E3

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5 BLOOD DIAMOND 10:30, 1:25, 4:20 7:15, 10:10 R-13

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MUSIC MUSEUM

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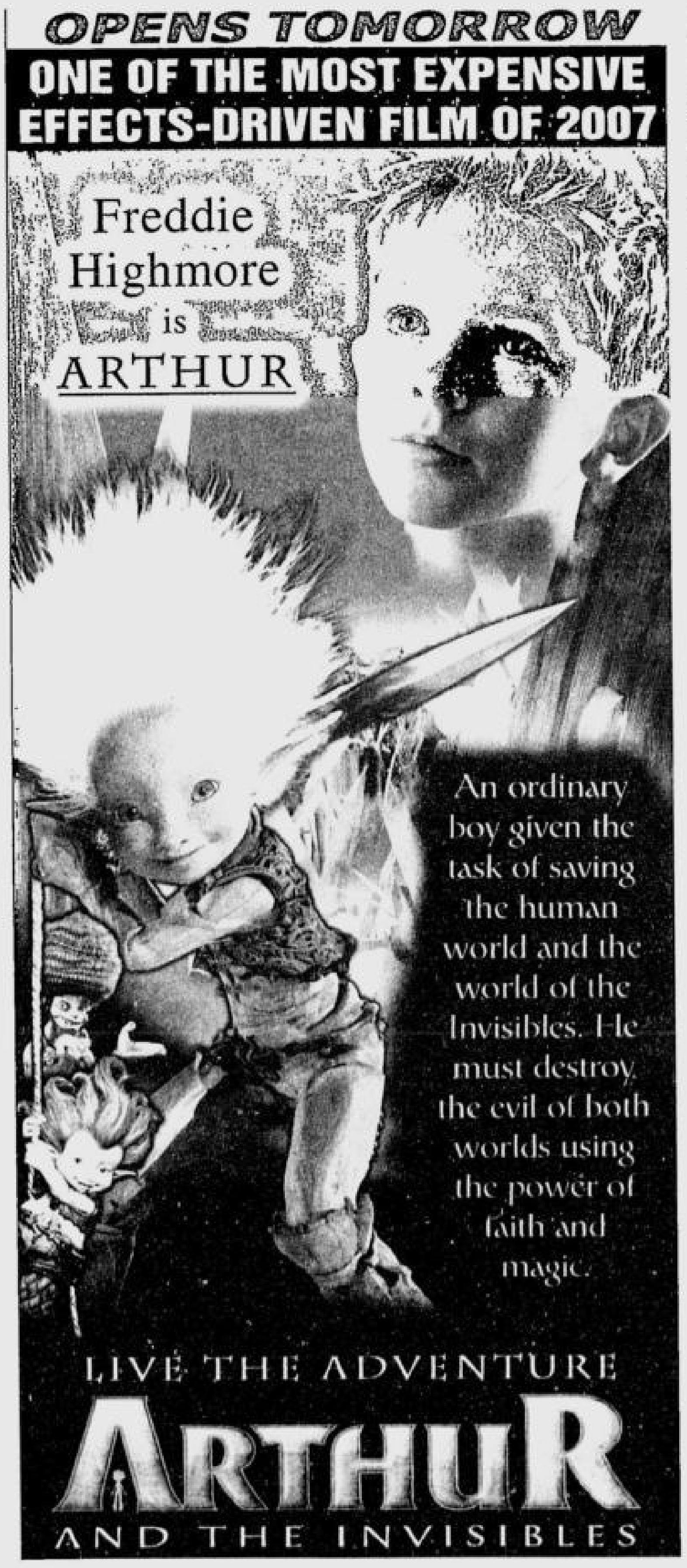
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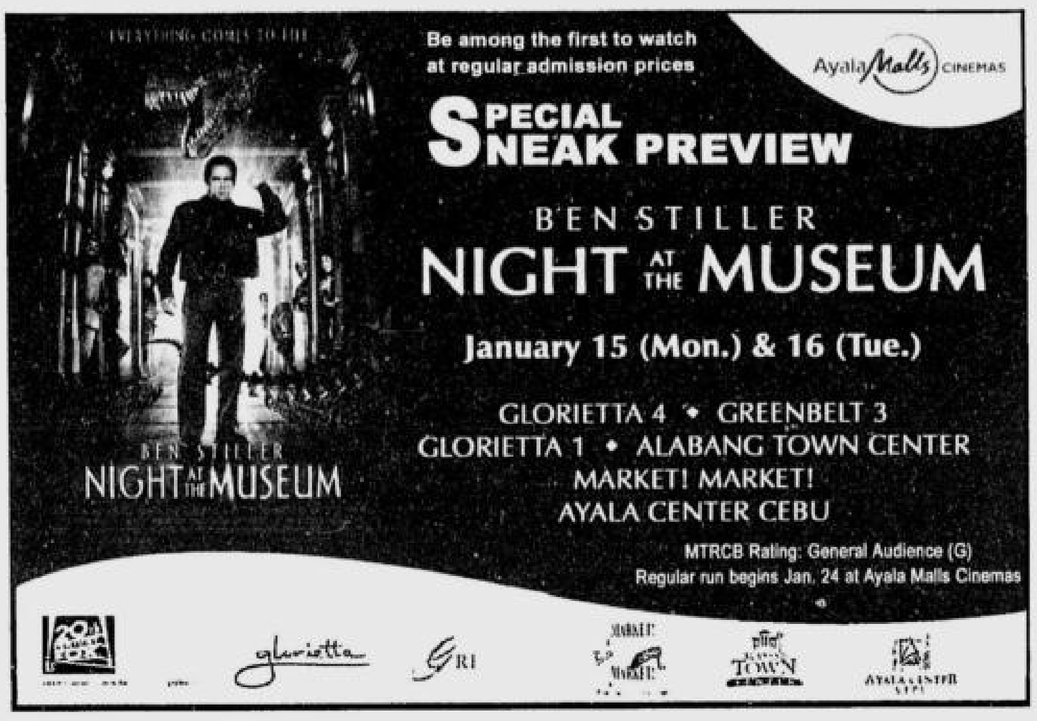
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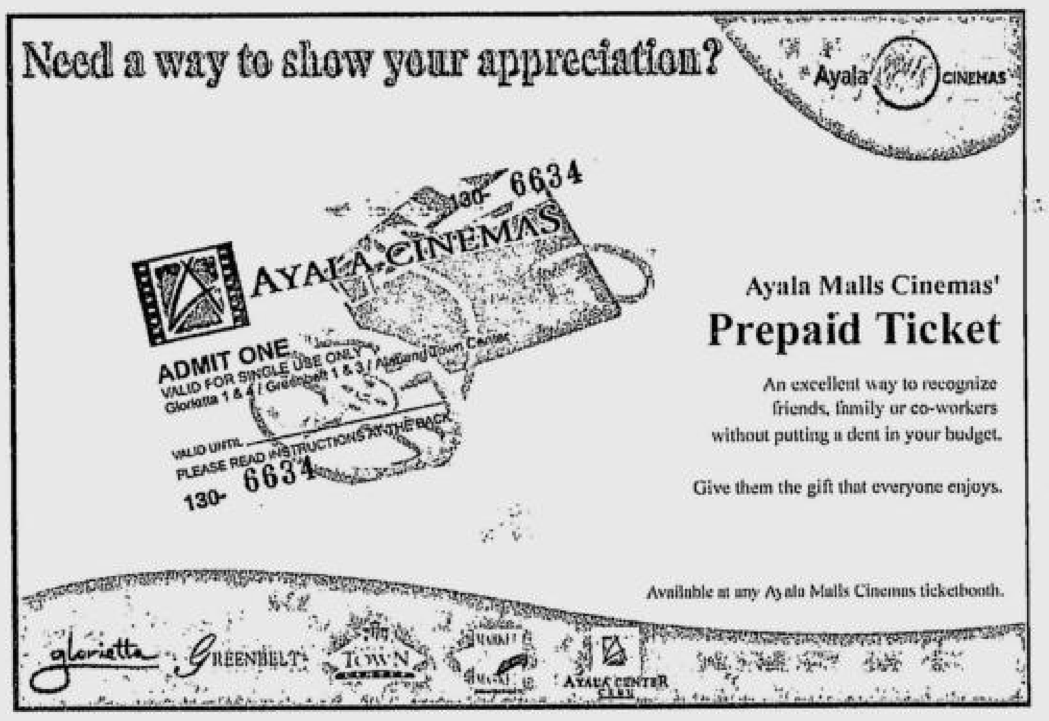
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Bad vibes within ...

From page E2

ray of gorgeous, curvy women. Who among his leading ladies—**Mariel Rodriguez, Juliana Palermo** and **Cass Ponti**—would he court if he didn't have **Desiree del Valle**?

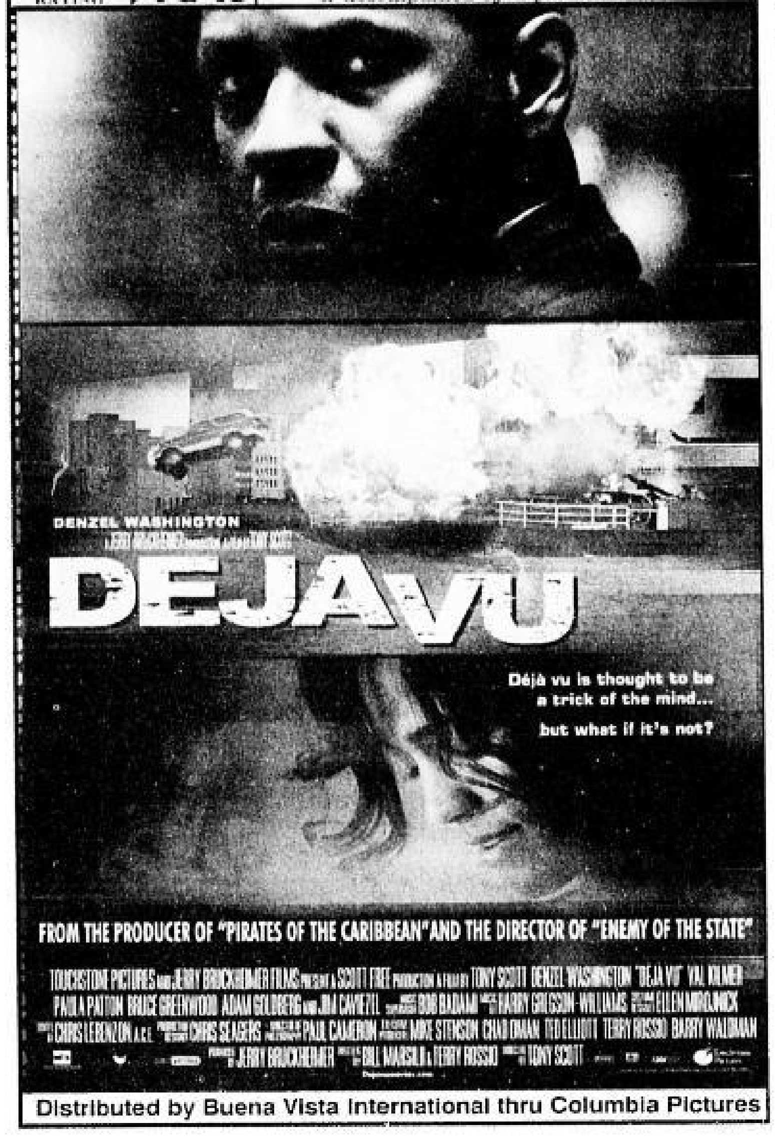
Vhong jokes. "Can I have one of each kind? Kidding aside, I'd go for Mariel *kasi* we're both *kalog*."

Smorgasboard lover boy, huh? But now he only desires Desiree.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

VHONG NAVARRO

EXPERIENCE THE PHENOMENON
OPENS TOMORROW!
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult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Déjà vu is thought to be a trick of the mind... but what if it's not?

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BLOOD DIAMOND R13 2:10,5:10,8:10	ROB-B-HOOD PG13 12:35,3:05,5:35,8:05	ERAGON G 1:00,3:20,5:40, 8:00,10:20

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4	GRIFFIN & PHOENIX 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00 PG-13

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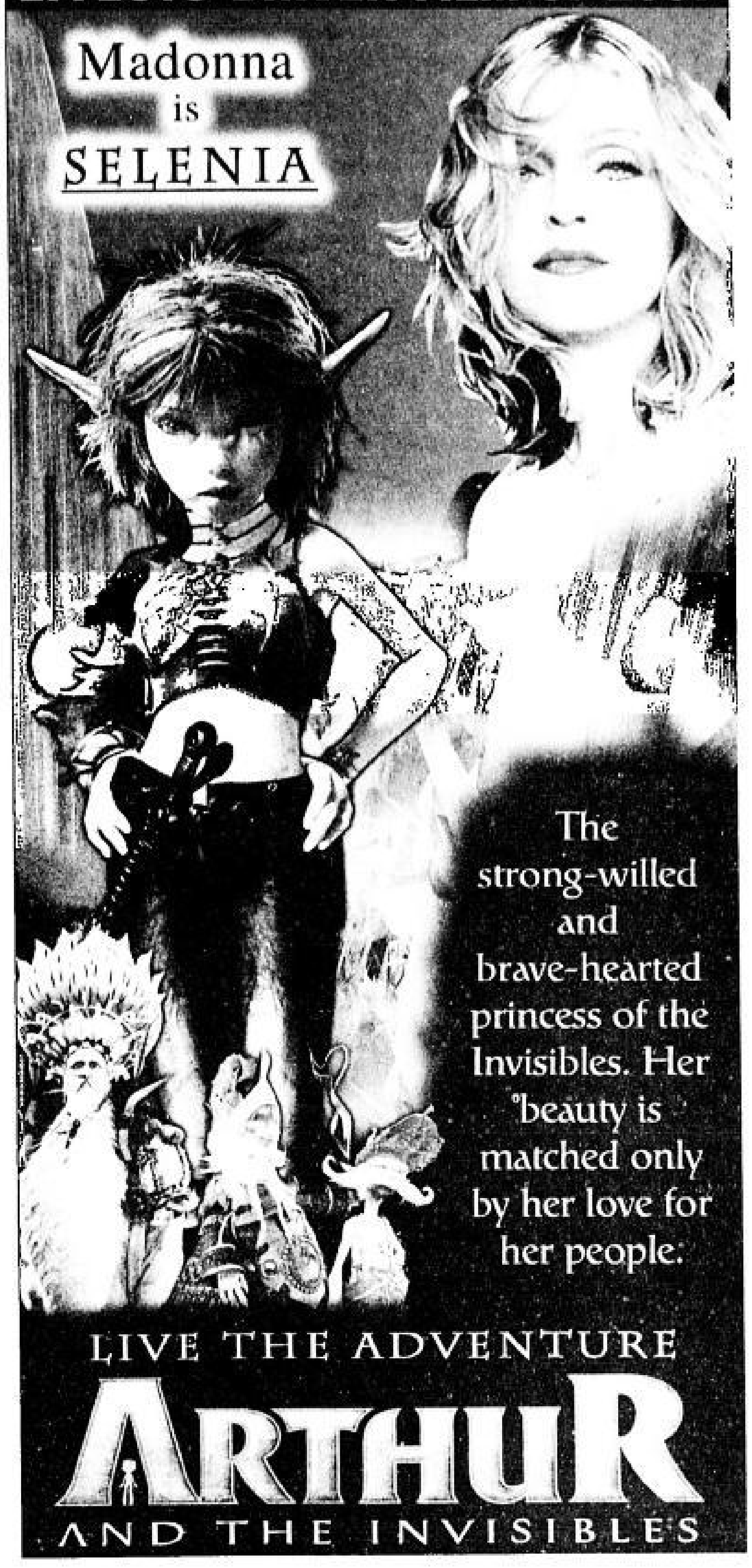
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 ERAGON	2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO	3 THX NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX	5 ROB-B-HOOD	6 ERAGON	7 BLOOD DIAMOND
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 BLOOD DIAMOND	2 ERAGON		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX ERAGON GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 ROB-B-HOOD GUARANTEED SEATS	4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	5 BLOOD DIAMOND GUARANTEED SEATS	
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	3 ERAGON	4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX	5 ROB-B-HOOD	
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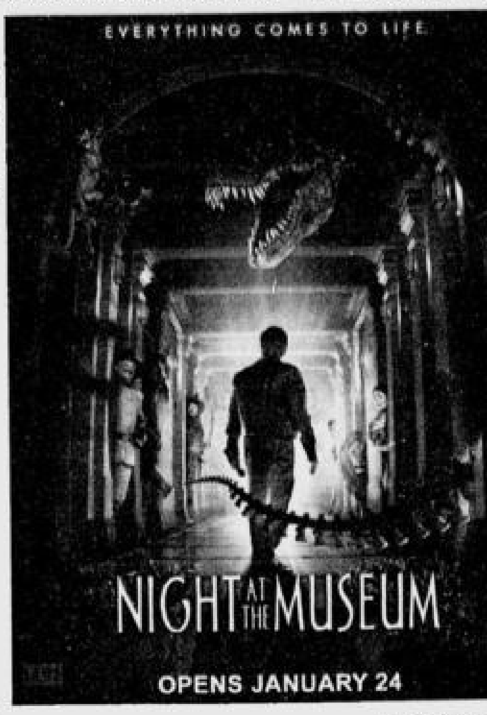

OPENS JANUARY 24

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
SNEAK PREVIEW

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1:00PM
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2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
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6 ENTENG KABISOTE 3

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5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
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7 ERAGON
8 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
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5 BLOOD DIAMOND
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
8 MANO PO 5
9 ROB-B-HOOD
10 ERAGON
11 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
12 ENTENG KABISOTE 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
2 MANO PO 5
3 ERAGON
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 ROB-B-HOOD
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 ERAGON
9 BLOOD DIAMOND
10 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
12 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 ERAGON
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 ROB-B-HOOD
6 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
7 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
8 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
9 MANO PO 5
10 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 BLOOD DIAMOND
5 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
8 ERAGON
9 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 BLOOD DIAMOND

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 ROB-B-HOOD
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
4 ERAGON
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 ERAGON
7 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
8 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
9 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
10 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11 MANO PO 5
12 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ERAGON
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

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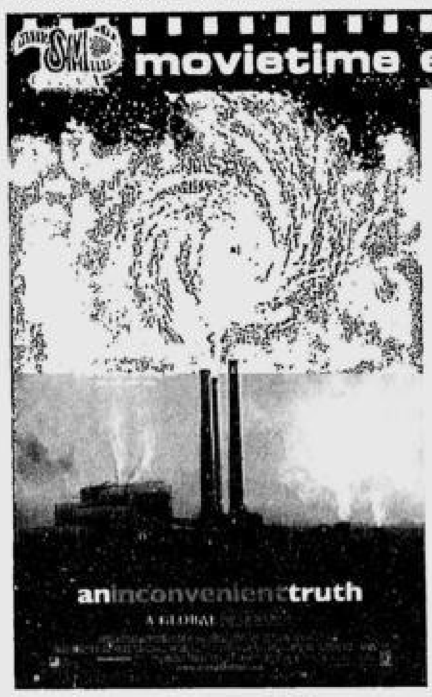

Former US Vice President Al Gore presses a timely issue worth everybody's time: global warming. Gore addresses the issue in his surprisingly funny, engaging, open and downright way with facts and predictions that will eventually convince us to stand and make a difference. "An Inconvenient Truth" lets us re-examine that global warming, more than the usual political agenda, is the biggest challenge of our global civilization

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LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 ERAGON
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 ERAGON
2 ROB-B-HOOD
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 ERAGON
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ROB-B-HOOD

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 ERAGON
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
2 ERAGON
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ROB-B-HOOD

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 MANO PO 5
3 ERAGON
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ROB-B-HOOD
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ERAGON

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 FEAST
6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
8 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 THE RETURN
2 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
5 RESERVED
6 ERAGON
7 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
8 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 ERAGON
2 THE RETURN
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 BOA
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 ROB-B-HOOD

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 ERAGON
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 FEAST

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 ERAGON • THX
2:15 4:40 7:05 9:30

2 BLOOD DIAMOND
1:30 4:20 7:10 10.00

3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 ERAGON
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

5 ROB-B-HOOD
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 MANO PO
12:00 2:30 5:00

7 GRIFFIN AND PHOENIX
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

9 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
12:40 2:55 5:10 7:25 9:40

10 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 ERAGON
10:20 12:30 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

2 GRIFFIN AND PHOENIX
12:30 2.50 5:10 7:30 9.50

3 BLOOD DIAMOND
10:10 1:05 4:00 6:55 9:50

4 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
10:30 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
10:10 12.30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

6 ROB-B-HOOD
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
Sneak Preview

METRO EAST 682-8193 - 682-8199

1 GRIFFIN AND PHOENIX
11 10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
11:25 1:55 4:25 6:55 9:20

3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 ROB-B-HOOD
12:50 3:35 6:20 9:05

5 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
1:20 4:00 6:40 9.00

6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
Sneak Preview

7 ERAGON
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

8 BLOOD DIAMOND
11:20 2:30 5:40 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231, 935-3228-30

1 ERAGON
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 KAMASUTRA 3
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

PIONEER 687-5378

1 ERAGON
1:05 3:30 5:55 8:20

2 BLOOD DIAMOND
12 05 2 55 5 45 8 35

3 ROB-B-HOOD
12:50 3:20 5:50 8:20

4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
Sneak Preview

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

Sneak Previews

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starmills pampanga angeles

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REGULAR Showing:
January 24

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM Sneak Preview
3 LIGALIG
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 ROB-B-HOOD

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 ERAGON
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 KAMASUTRA 3
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 ROB-B-HOOD

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM Sneak Preview
2 ROB-B-HOOD
3 ERAGON
4 KAMASUTRA 3
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
2 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 8
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 NIGHT MUSEUM Sneak Preview

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 KAMASUTRA 3
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM Sneak Preview
4 ERAGON
5 ROB-B-HOOD
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

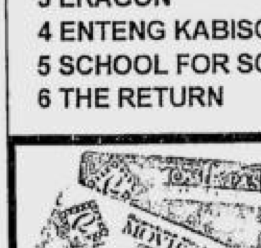
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 BLOOD DIAMOND
6 ERAGON

BACOLOD (034) 441-0463 (034) 441-0459

1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ERAGON
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 3/SHAKE RATTLE
5 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
6 THE RETURN

ILOILO (033) 338-8070

1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
4 THE RETURN
5 KAMASUTRA 3
6 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS



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DID YOU KNOW...

ACTION!
SCENE 1
TAKE 1

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Cell-phone journalism

NEW YORK—ACTOR Michael Richards in a West Hollywood comedy club and the authorities in Iraq who executed Saddam Hussein painfully learned that the prying eyes of television news can belong to anyone who carries a cell phone.

Saddam's execution and Richards' flameout illustrate the growing power of cell phone video as a news tool, not only to supplement stories but to change them.

"It brought to a fore the sense that wow, this is a ubiquitous technology," said Mark Lukasiewicz, NBC News vice president for digital media.

The video of Saddam's execution told a much different story than the government-authorized video issued about six hours after Saddam's hanging.

This video had audio, revealing angry exchanges and people loudly taunting Saddam in his final moments.

Smoking gun

An audience member's cell phone caught the angry, racially offensive tirade unleashed by Richards at a Los Angeles comedy club in November.

Would it have even been a story without the video? If witnesses had described it later and Richards denied his actions, it could have been a he-said, she-said story with many people not believing the actor who played the beloved Kramer on sitcom "Seinfeld" would do such a thing.

Cell phone video, despite having not nearly the picture quality of those produced by professional broadcasters, "does what pictures often do—it reveals the truth of the story," Lukasiewicz said.

Networks even use their own cell phone video in cases where reporters aren't accompanied by cameramen.

Careful process

Digital technology has the power to make everyone a news reporter, said David Westin, ABC News president.

"That has enormous potential for good and also has enormous potential for mischief," he said. "The challenge for us is to get the good and weed out the mischief."

It requires a careful vetting process unnecessary when the networks gather their own material, Westin said. *David Bauder, AP*

"LAND Before Time"

New adventures

"LAND BEFORE TIME: THE BIG FREEZE" PREmieres Jan. 20 at 8 a.m. on Cartoon Network.

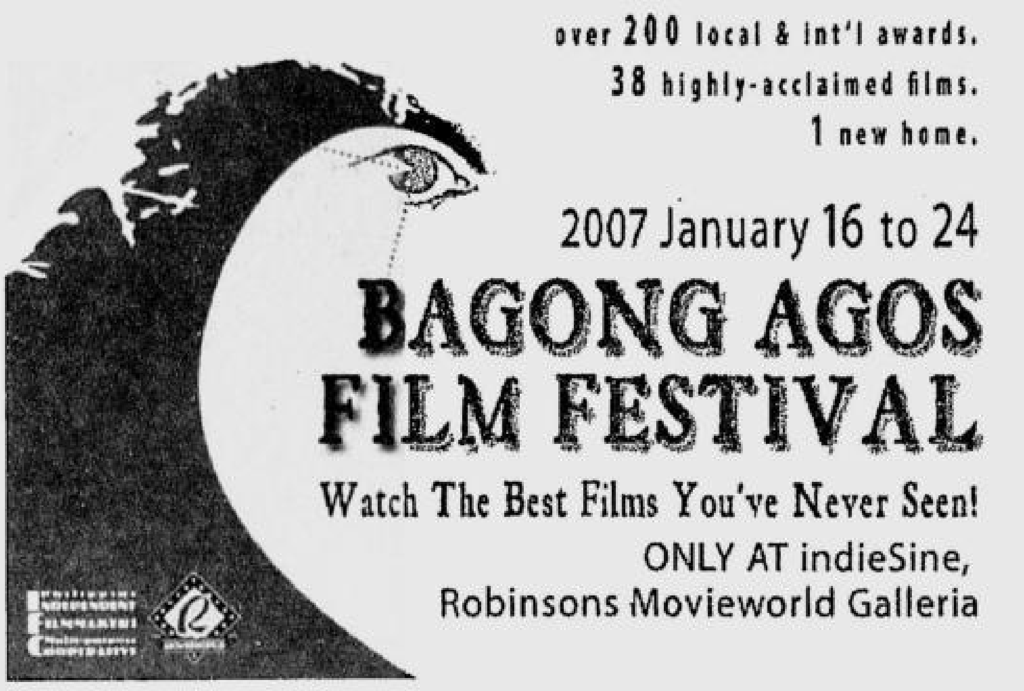
This weekend, Cartoon Network Theater travels to the age of the dinosaurs for one cool adventure.

In this escapade, snow falls in the Great Valley for the first time, puzzling and enchanting the dinosaurs.

It doesn't take long before they realize that these fun and fluffy white flakes are threatening their survival. But Littlefoot, Cera, Ducky and Petrie are more worried about Spike.

A visiting Stegosaurus herd fascinates Spike, who decides to join them on their journey to escape the freeze.

MALAPIT NA MALAPIT NA ISANG MALAKING AGOS!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ERAGON 12:20 / 1:10 / 2:40 / 3:30 / 5:00 5:50 / 7:20 / 8:10 / 9:50
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50
THE BLOOD DIAMOND 1:05 / 4:00 / 6:55 / 9:50
ROB-B-HOOD 1:10 / 4:00 / 6:50 / 9:40
GRIFFIN & PHOENIX 1:45 / 4:20 / 6:55 / 9:30
Globe PLATINUM CINEMA
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
KASAL, KASALI, KASALO 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40
SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 1:10 / 4:00 / 6:50 / 9:40
ERAGON 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5
1 ERAGON 12:10 / 2:15 / 4:20 / 6:25 / 8:30
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 12:20 R4 / 1:40 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40
3 THE BLOOD DIAMOND 12:35 / 2:30 / 5:25 / 8:20
4 ROB-B-HOOD 12:40 / 3:30 / 5:20 / 8:10
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS
For more information, call 911-5555 or log on to ticketnet.com.ph & aranetacenter.net

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
MTRCB RATING: G GENERAL PATRONAGE
OPENS JAN 24
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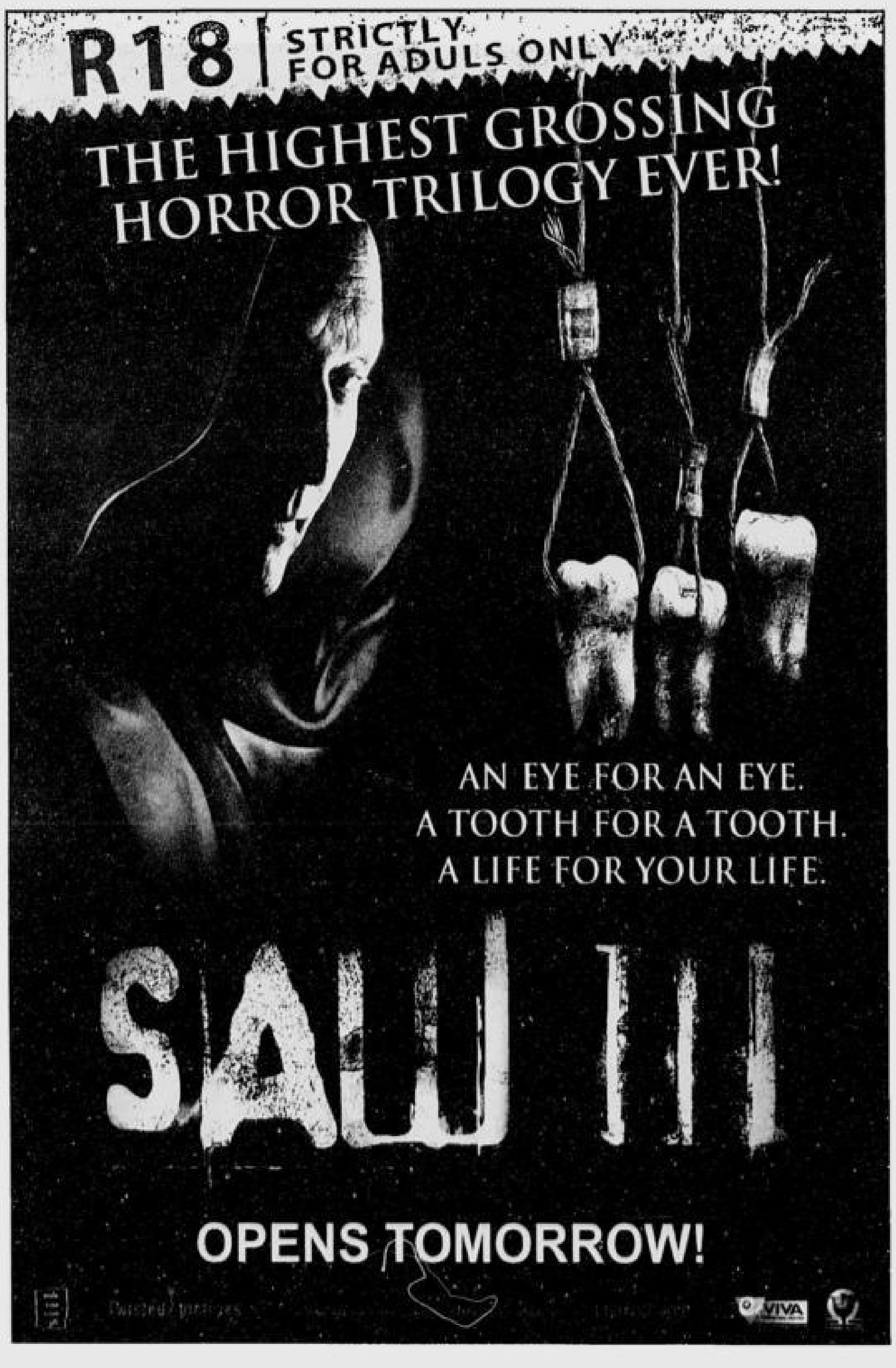
GATEWAY CINEPLEX 10 & ALI MALL CINEMAS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A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.
A LIFE FOR YOUR LIFE.
SAW III
OPENS TOMORROW!
VIVA

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 ERAGON
MTRCB GP
1.00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
2 ROB-B-HOOD
MTRCB PG-13
1.15, 4:00, 6:45, 9:35
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
MTRCB R-13
12.30, 3:40, 6:50, 10:00
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSUEM
MTRCB GP
12.20, 2:45, 5:10, 7.35, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
MTRCB PG-13
2.45, 5.10, 7.35, 10.00
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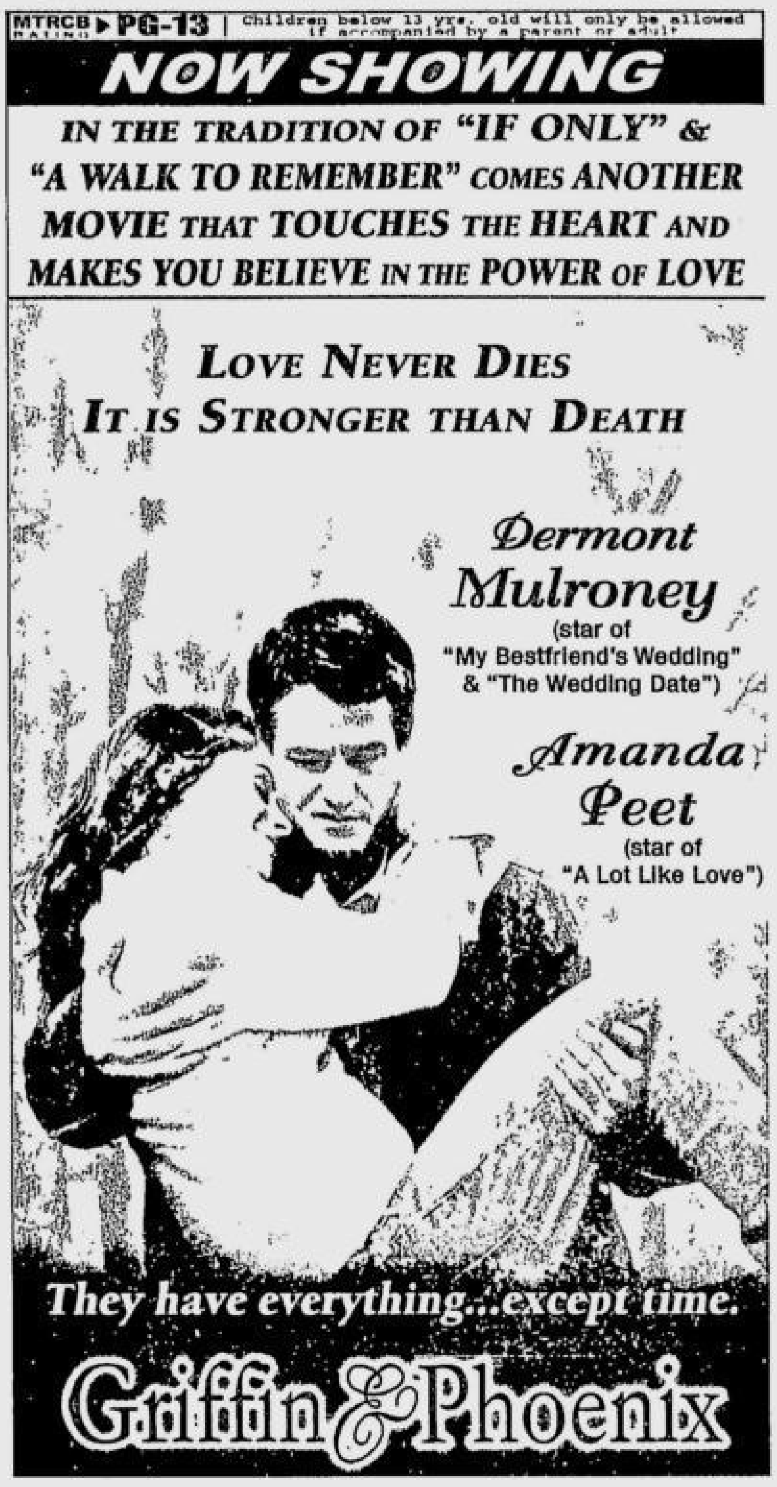
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(star of "My Bestfriend's Wedding" & "The Wedding Date")
Amanda Peet
(star of "A Lot Like Love")
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Griffin & Phoenix

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David Bowie is MALTAZARD
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ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

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MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 (DOLBY) ERAGON
2 (DOLBY) ROB-B-HOOD
3 (DOLBY) BLOOD DIAMOND
4 (DOLBY) NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ROB-B-HOOD

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7260150
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ERAGON
5 RESRVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 6433994
1 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
2 ROB-B-HOOD
3 ERAGON
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Corporation
1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 SHAKE, RATTLE, & ROLL - 8
2 ERAGON
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 ERAGON
5 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 ROB-B-HOOD
8 MANO PO - 5
9 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
10 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
2 (DOLBY) NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 (DOLBY) ERAGON
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) ROB-B-HOOD
2 ERAGON
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ERAGON
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
3 KAMASUTRA - 3
4 LIGALIG (BATANG MAYNILA)

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 ERAGON
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 ROB-B-HOOD

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SUPER NOYPI
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 (DOLBY) ERAGON
3 (DOLBY) BLOOD DIAMOND
4 (DOLBY) GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ERAGON
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
2 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
4 ERAGON

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 LIGALIG (BATANG MAYNILA)
2 MANO PO -5

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
2 ORO
3 UNANG TIKIM
4 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 3
2 BED TIME STORY
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 ERAGON

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL - 8
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ERAGON

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
2 MANO PO -5

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Bimbo Cerrudo finds his niche

The singer says he has reinvented himself for a different—'more appreciative'—audience

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

SINGER BIMBO CERRUDO HAS just finished a 20-show concert series at the Teatrino Theater in Greenhills titled "Cerrudo: Classico... Classic Ko." The shows have been such a hit since July that there are scheduled repeats in Australia this month, and a planned provincial tour this summer.

Cerrudo enthused that the series is different from the more contemporary, radio-staple format he's done in the past. He says he's reinvented himself for a different, more appreciative, audience.

TAKE FIVE

"My forte is the classics," he says. "I'm back to the old songs. I sing not only the songs that are acknowledged classics; I also get to perform those that I believe are potential classics. This is where I'm gonna stay."

Cerrudo has done different things throughout his long show biz career. He released a pop album in 1992, when he was best known as a balladeer. He has appeared in about 25 plays in the last two decades, too, but while he's an established and respected artist in those fields, he admitted that he's had bleak and rocky periods.

"I started out when I was about 20 years old, in 1985. Now I'm 41 and having the time of my life, still singing. I've been doing theater on and off. In a nutshell, my career has gone up and down, but in the past year and a half, I've had some shift of consciousness. I know my niche now, finally.

Please elaborate on this "shift of consciousness" and your niche.

It's using this gift for the benefit of the less-privileged. So I prefer singing for groups that raise funds, to be able to help out. This series has really helped out through different foundations.

My singing now is kind of a crossover between classic and pop. I'm smack in the middle. We're talking timeless, very old Italian and Spanish songs given a twist. Sadly, so many people of our generation have overlooked and forgotten them. But other people, apparently the middle-aged market, the older crowd, see something refreshing in it.

They appreciate the music of Burt Bacharach, Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra, whose songs I also sing. I perform with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, so it makes a whole lot of difference. Many of them have seen the show five or six times; they keep coming back and they bring their *amigos* and *amigas*.

What made you pursue this style?

I was not consistent. I was keeping my head above water. I'd go pop, and then I'd go acting. *Sabi ko*, "I'm doing so many things. I should focus on one job *muna*." I woke up one day and asked myself, "Why is it that, when I sing all of these standards and Italian classics, they all love me and pay me well; but when I sing pop, wala, *hindi ako pinapansin*?" I thought, God is telling me something.

Was it an easy shift?

I went back to what I really trained for under voice teacher Irma Potenciano for six years in UST (University of Santo Tomas). That was my formal education, vocal training, from 1983 to 1989. I sang for her birthday recently. She used to tell me, "*Tigilan mo 'yang* pop." Now, when I look back, I realize that all this time *pala*, she's been right.

Since I went back to all this, so many doors have opened. Let's put it this way, I'm one of the few people who work in this genre locally. And the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, we have fun. Singing isn't all about making money; it's also about fun.

Have you noticed that same realization in other singers?

I've seen a lot of artists who haven't found their niche. It's a process. It requires a certain frame of mind to go past the illusions. There were times when I was frustrated. I was earning, but not so well. Maybe the universe was confused with me, too. Back then, I was just singing to keep my head above water, just to live.

Now I'm doing it for fun, and the rewards have been tremendous. I no longer believe in the words "hard work." I believe in "joyful work," "easy work." When you say "you work hard for the money," you're coming from a position of "need." If you think something is hard, the universe will make it hard.

You seem spiritually attuned, content.

That's the consciousness I'm in now. I believe in love, joy. I don't believe in fear. I would like to think that I'm more ecumenical now, because I hate divisions that fuel egos, wars and so much fear in God. I'm past these. I guess the Philippines is not really ready for a one-God, one-people movement. I don't know. Let it begin with me; I will live my life without judging [others], and see God in everybody. It's been very joyful.

Has raising your own family given you a different perspective?

Yes. My wife Reena manages me now, and we are reaping rewards that we thought we should have reaped a long time ago. But it had to happen this time, when I'm really ready. If this had happened before, I would have probably fallen back.

Does your son want to be a performer someday, like you?

I don't think so. I think he wants to be a lawyer. He always goes between people and negotiates. He's like that.

What disciplines have you learned from acting and singing in plays?

To always perform as though it were my last performance.. No more "I wish I did this or that." To perform for the last person seated in the last row of the theater just as well as for the person seated right in front of me.

What do you consider as career highlights, prior to your work now?

Wala. I've done so many stage productions where I played the lead, but at the end of the day, I would not bask in whatever praise. There's so much room for improvement. I know I can do a lot more.

How life has changed for Dave

RUSHES

DAVE VALENTINO OF VIRGINIA, USA, said the "Starstruck" council has been picking on him, giving him bad ratings.

"It's like they have nothing better to say," said Valentino, 20, who was placed in the "attitude box" by Starstruck council member Louie Ignacio for using his cell phone during workshop sessions.

Ignacio picked Valentino, Jewel Mische and Jesi Corcuera as the *pasaway* (hard-headed) in this batch of "Starstruck" avengers during the Dec. 31 show at the Raja Sulayman park in Luneta.

"My cell phone was taken away from me early December," Valentino explained. "That was a long time ago. So when it was mentioned during the show, it was like, 'What's going on?' My friends know I'm not *pasaway*."

Valentino, who returned to the country to study Physical Therapy, said he understood an element of conflict in the show is necessary: "Perfect is boring. So they say things that would make the show more interesting, I guess."

Mische, who was again singled out last Sunday by Ignacio for her lackluster performance in a production number, said she did not want to comment about the charges against her. Ignacio said she was always late, and always complained about the clothes she had to wear.

Ignacio also told her she should watch a tape of her performance and see if she had talent.

"I don't know if he was serious about the tape," Mische told INQUIRER. "I still don't have that tape."

Corcuera, who was castigated for not being able to follow instructions, said she did not mind the comments of the council.

"I know they just want me to improve," she said. "*Ayoko maging pasaway* (I don't want to be labeled as incorrigible)." *Nini Valera*

DAVE VALENTINO

Politician's wife

LOS ANGELES—"Desperate Housewives" star Felicity Huffman is set to play the title role in a US version of the British television mini-series "The Politician's Wife", it was reported Friday.

Huffman, winner of last year's best actress drama award at the Golden Globes and an Oscar nominee for "Transamerica," will portray the jilted wife of a politician who has an affair, Variety reported. *AFP*

FELICITY HUFFMAN

Amicably resolved

LOS ANGELES—Michael Jackson has amicably resolved a lawsuit filed by a Beverly Hills pharmacy that claimed the singer owed more than $100,000 for prescription drugs during the past two years, his spokeswoman said.

"(Mickey) Fine Pharmacy has been paid," Jackson spokeswoman Raymone K. Bain said in a statement Friday. *AP*

Soul museum

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA—The children of late soul singer James Brown are planning to turn his home into a Graceland-like museum and build a mausoleum on the site for his body, an attorney for Brown said Friday.

The plans for the Beech Island, South Carolina site are being discussed by Brown's children, several close friends and the singer's trustees, said attorney Debri Opri, an attorney for Brown. The group wants to consult with Elvis Presley's family to see how they did Graceland, Opri said. *AP*

Irwin video destroyed

NEW YORK—The only video of Australian "Crocodile Hunter" Steve Irwin's fatal encounter with a stingray has been destroyed, according to his widow.

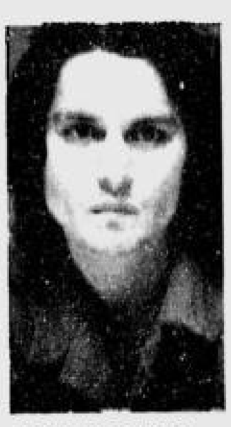
Irwin, 44, died on Sept. 4 last year after a stingray's serrated barb pierced his heart while he was filming under water off Australia's coast. *Reuters*

Producer Depp

LOS ANGELES—Heart-throb Johnny Depp will produce a movie about the mysterious poisoning death of former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko, it was reported Friday.

Movie industry daily Variety reported that rights to a book about Litvinenko's death in London last year have been scooped up by studio giant Warner Bros for Depp's production company to develop.

John Malkovich is being lined up to star in a second movie, based on a book co-authored by Litvinenko, "Blowing Up Russia", the British Independent newspaper reported Saturday. *AFP*



JOHNNY DEPP

OPENS JAN. 24

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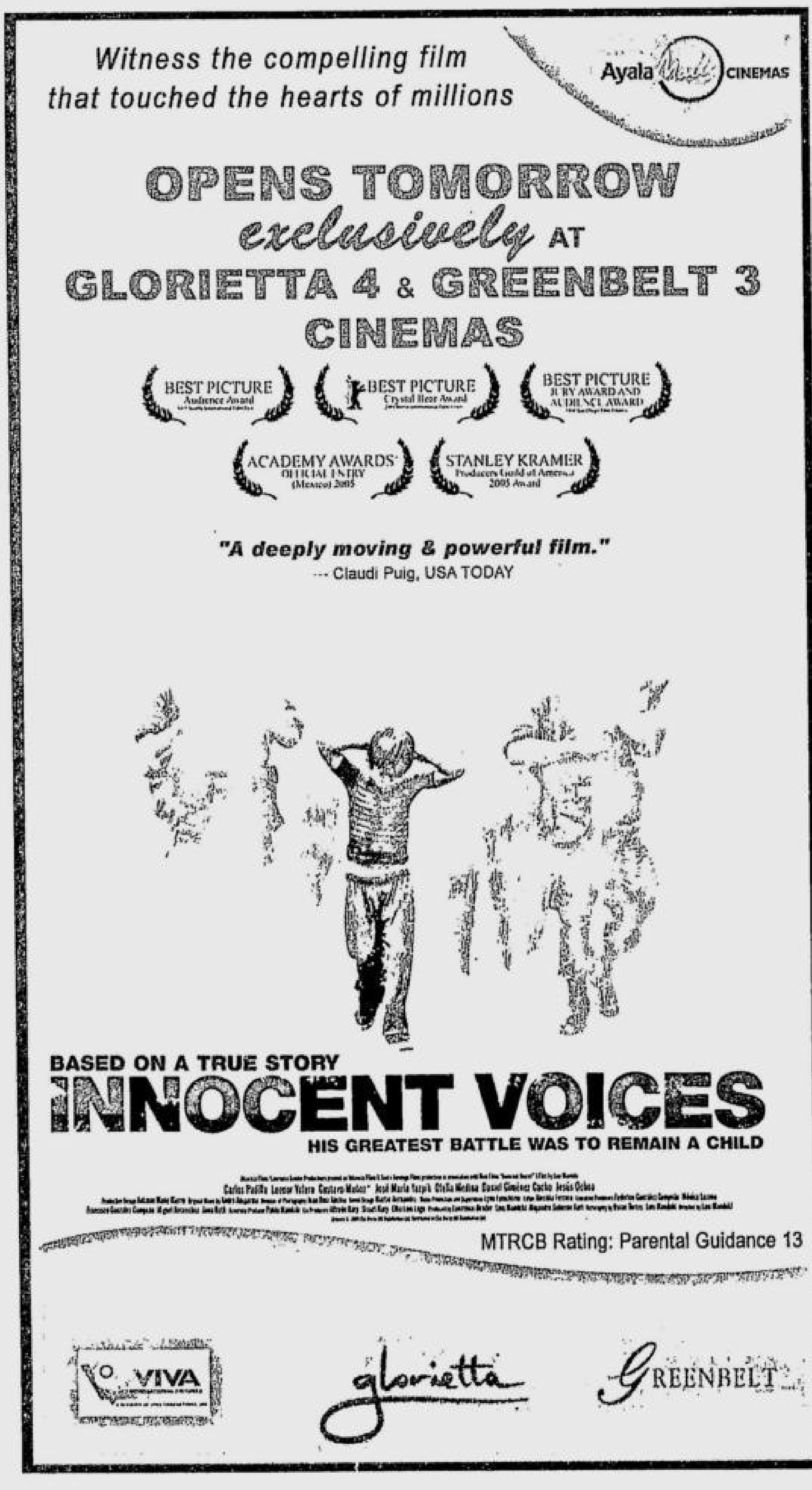

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